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Rapid development of El Sistema-inspired music programs around the world has left many music educators seeking the tools to emulate El Sistema effectively. This paper offers information to these people by evaluating one successful program in the United States and how it reflects the intent and mission of El Sistema. Preliminary research on El Sistema draws from articles and from information provided by Mark Churchill, Dean Emeritus of New England Conservatory's Department of Preparatory and Continuing Education and director of El Sistema USA. Travel to Baltimore, Maryland and to four cities in Venezuela allowed for observation and interviews with people from the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's OrchKids program and four núcleos in El Sistema, respectively.

OrchKids and El Sistema aim to improve the lives of their students and their communities, but El Sistema takes action only through music while OrchKids has a broader spectrum of activities. OrchKids also uses a wider variety of musical genres than El Sistema does. Both programs impact their students by giving them a strong sense of personal identity and of belonging to community. The children learn responsibility to the communities around them such as their neighborhood and their orchestra, and also develop a sense of belonging to a larger international music community.

THE PEDAGOGY OF BECOMING: IDENTITY FORMATION THROUGH
THE BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S ORCHKIDS
AND VENEZUELA'S EL SISTEMA

by

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This paper is dedicated to my parents,
H. Stephen Shoemaker and Cherrie Shoemaker,
who have supported me unconditionally,
and have instilled in me a passion
for music and for social justice.

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Preface

For several years I have been fascinated with the undercurrent in American classical music towards building audiences, branching out, trying to reach younger people, mixing genres, and attempting to stay viable. So, I eagerly signed up to study ethnomusicology during my doctoral degree, fully intending to focus on classical music in American culture. I was excited to study the way music interacts with people, their lives and their culture.

Dan Trahey, a longtime friend and colleague, called me during my first year of doctoral study and excitedly told me about his latest project. He was helping the Baltimore Symphony to start a new education program that would aim at connecting with inner-city children. He knew of a program in Venezuela that was garnering a lot of attention as of late in the U.S. According to him, I needed to know about this Venezuelan program. This was going to be his model for the new program in Baltimore.

About the Study

The Venezuelan program dubbed El Sistema creates social change through music education. Open to all children in Venezuela and aimed at the less fortunate, El Sistema gives free instruction six days a week and free instruments to all members. It is designed not to create classical musicians, but to create good citizens. By focusing on the

community of the orchestra, children are given skill sets and self-esteem that will help them to have a positive and successful life. They are expected to give back to their own communities in return for the gifts that music has given them. A wonderful side effect of this social project is that it has created beautiful, joyful, and energetic music at the highest level.

The inspiration and encouragement provided by the example of El Sistema has been felt broadly in the global music community. Many who are afraid of the decline of the classical music profession in the United States are now open to the possibility of its reinvigoration through programs like El Sistema. It is quickly becoming one of the most popular topics amongst music organizations in the United States, where a search for the “cure” to a lack of interest in classical music is a top priority. The popular interest in classical music, the quality of music education, and, perhaps most importantly, the underdog story of success from meager means has resonated with American music lovers. The energy with which the students of El Sistema perform, and the joy that they express when creating music together, is infectious.

On November 7, 2007, The Center for Music-In-Education at New England Conservatory hosted an El Sistema Invitational Seminar. The seminar introduced El Sistema to a large gathering of music educators, arts critics and reporters, and arts administrators. After dissecting articles and watching videos, the guests were invited to write their own commentary on their reaction to El Sistema, and whether or not they can see it functioning in the U.S. Angela Myles Beeching, Director of the NEC Career Services Center and author of *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music*,

remarked, “I find El Sistema deeply inspiring. We all benefit from examples and reminders of the power of music, and of why we were each initially drawn to music.”¹

Richard Dyer, music critic, commented on how El Sistema brings music to the underserved communities in Venezuela: “The whole great experiment confirms something I have long believed, that outstanding aptitude and talent for music exists in far more people than those who are fortunate enough for reasons of birth, geography, and social circumstances to find the opportunity to exercise them.”² Alan Fletcher, President and CEO of the Aspen Music Festival and School shared his emotional reaction to El Sistema, saying, “With respect to what we learn from social transformation in Venezuela, I think it is an electrifying and curiously humbling proof that the rhetoric we have always used about music is true. It does indeed have a transforming social, spiritual, and intellectual power.”³ Scott D. Lipscomb, Professor of Music Education at the University of Minnesota, eloquently summed up the reaction that is common to many:

Following a thorough review of materials provided to me about [El Sistema], it is simply impossible to remain unmoved or to believe, with any credibility at all, that music is not capable of serving the purpose of dramatic social transformation . . . My voice joins those of many before me...in congratulating Maestro [Jose Antonio] Abreu, [founder of El Sistema] his colleagues, the talented musicians of every age, and the Venezuelan people for their incredible accomplishments to date, which should undoubtedly serve as a model to the world.⁴

¹ Angela Myles Beeching, “Commentary Compendium,” Center for Music-In-Education@NEC, El Sistema Invitational Seminar, November 7, 2007.

² Richard Dyer, Music critic and writer, formerly with the Boston Globe, “Commentary Compendium,” Center for Music-In-Education@NEC, El Sistema Invitational Seminar, November 7, 2007.

³ Alan Fletcher, President & CEO, Aspen Music Festival and School, Ibid.

⁴ Scott D. Lipscomb, Professor of Music Education, University of Minnesota, Ibid.

When visitors to the program experience the joy that El Sistema students have for music and for life, and the promise of possibility to so many children who might otherwise have had nothing to look forward to in their futures, they are inspired to duplicate this program in their own communities and to perpetuate this gift of music to those who need it the most.

This study will focus on Baltimore Symphony's OrchKids, an El Sistema-inspired music education program based in West Baltimore. It will expose the program's choices in methodology and administration, the influence it has on the identity formation of its students, its capability of building community, and how all of these things compare with El Sistema.

An exponential growth in El Sistema-inspired programs around the world has left many administrators seeking the tools to model El Sistema effectively. This study is intended to offer information to these people by studying what one successful program in the United States is doing, and how it reflects the intent and mission of El Sistema. This study of the Baltimore Symphony's OrchKids will illuminate its choices in administration and pedagogy, will evaluate some of the inherent cultural differences between Baltimore and Venezuela, and will explain how those differences affect the manner in which OrchKids is run.

Some choices made while developing an El Sistema-based program may be influenced by location and culture. The study will show how OrchKids is actively adapting the ideals of El Sistema to allow for success in Baltimore. Differences in musical background, class, resources of the city, the experiences and priorities of the

leadership, and the funding sources will lead to differences between OrchKids and El Sistema. These factors all largely affect how OrchKids has been designed and how it operates on a daily basis. Some of the important aspects stressed in both programs are methods used for musical instruction, care for each child, parental and community involvement, and the goal to create a greater worldview and a positive outlook for the future.

This paper will inspect OrchKids as a case study in applying the principles of El Sistema to communities outside of Venezuela. It will show the particular values, priorities, administrative choices and teaching techniques employed in OrchKids. The author believes the defining factors of an El Sistema-influenced program to be the development of personal and social identity and a commitment to one's community through group learning in music.

Based on ethnographies and interviews, I find that the promotion of personal strength, commitment to one's community, and sense of belonging to an imagined community of musicians worldwide are what link the spirit of OrchKids to El Sistema. Additionally, the organizations share the pedagogical values of group learning and ear training, and the intent of helping those children with the most need. El Sistema is about the process of becoming. It inspires its students to work towards becoming capable musicians, it gives them a sense of pride and the courage to set goals. El Sistema develops a positive identity for each child, which is strengthened through community.

Questions asked during this study aimed to determine the defining elements of OrchKids and of El Sistema, and whether those elements can be shared when they are in different parts of the world. Some questions asked were:

1. What is the priority: social change or musical accomplishment?
2. Is the social change promoted in this group only accomplishable through music? And through the orchestra specifically?
3. How is the program funded?
4. Is the student progress being monitored? How so?
5. What is the music education process that you use? Explain the pedagogy.

Many more questions and ideas were explored in the process of the interviews, which took place in both Baltimore and Venezuela. The questions asked of students in Venezuela were intended to discover what value they see in El Sistema. Children were not interviewed in Baltimore. After interviewing many children in Venezuela it was decided that fewer, more substantial interviews with adults involved in the Baltimore program would be most beneficial.

Leaders of new El Sistema-based programs will be able to use this paper for guidance. It explicitly lists the approach taken in music classes for OrchKids, starting with pre-K classes, and addresses the strategy for introducing the students to the instruments. It covers the process of selecting leaders and involving the school and the community, as well as monitoring the progress of the children, of the program, and steps taken in fundraising. This paper will also cover other scholars' ideas on community and forming identity as a means of understanding further how OrchKids is able to help

children develop into good citizens with promise for the future. Though other leaders may need to make different choices for their respective programs, this information might save them time by informing their decisions. This paper may introduce them to special problems or values that they had not considered previously. It will highlight the importance of creating an environment that nurtures character and personal strength for all El Sistema-inspired programs.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

OrchKids

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's OrchKids program uses music education to broaden children's horizons and to build community in inner city Baltimore. Marin Alsop, music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Daniel Trahey, a music education and community engagement specialist, started OrchKids in 2008 after months of careful planning and fundraising. Alsop decided that civic involvement through music was a legacy that she wanted to leave in Baltimore. She called on Trahey to facilitate the development of a project that would bring music to a part of Baltimore that has had minimal interaction with the Symphony in the past.

Trahey proposed that they utilize the methods of El Sistema, a Venezuelan social program that was gaining notice from classical musicians and their audiences in the U.S. and abroad. Trahey traveled to Venezuela in 2007 to study El Sistema so that he would be more prepared for planning a successful new project that was unlike any other in the United States at that time.

While in Venezuela, Trahey taught the children in El Sistema and performed with them, but more importantly, he observed the mechanics of this enormous undertaking. He went hoping to define the components of El Sistema and to find its transferable aspects that would work in Baltimore. Currently, there are many people who understand the basic

tenets of El Sistema, but in 2006 there was very little information available to the public on the topic. A background on El Sistema will follow in the next section of this paper. Trahey's first reflection upon leaving Venezuela was his "positive outlook. Knowing it could be done. Seeing it there, seeing how grassroots it was. There wasn't much money but they were doing it. We're gonna be able to do this, too."⁵

OrchKids first garnered public attention when Alsop decided to donate \$100,000 of her own MacArthur Foundation Fellows Program prize money to get the program started.⁶ MacArthur Fellows are selected based on exceptional creativity, promise for important future advances based on a track record of significant accomplishment, and potential for the fellowship to facilitate subsequent creative work.⁷ "Indeed, the purpose of the MacArthur Fellows Program is to enable recipients to exercise their own creative instincts for the benefit of human society."⁸ Alsop was chosen for the award because she was "introducing a varied and challenging repertoire with a unique presentation approach and newly interpreting classical music to orchestras and audiences alike."⁹ The OrchKids program benefits society and could be considered a creative work both socially and

⁵ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, July 10, 2010.

⁶ "Tending OrchKids: Our view: BSO conductor invests soundly," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 27, 2008, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2008-05-27/news/0805260159_1_genius-music-director-alsop, (accessed March 12, 2012).

⁷ MacArthur Fellows Program, "About the Fellows Program," MacArthur: The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, http://www.macfound.org/site/c.lkLXJ8MQKrH/b.4536879/k.9B87/About_the_Program.htm (accessed June 10, 2010).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ MacArthur Fellow, "2005 Overview," MacArthur: The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation http://www.macfound.org/site/c.lkLXJ8MQKrH/b.1084235/k.3E32/2005_Overview.htm (accessed July 22, 2011).

musically. The gift was the jumpstart the OrchKids needed, and a great way to show Alsop's and the Symphony's commitment to its success. But financing was just the one of many hurdles to overcome before OrchKids could begin.

Another hurdle was determining the best location for OrchKids. Trahey decided that to run smoothly in Baltimore, OrchKids required the help of the school system. The partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools is essential because it provides an established structure that is equipped to deal with the bureaucratic regulations of an afterschool program in the United States. The school system provides facilities for the program's use, the trust of the parents, the help of the teachers and staff, as well as guidance from its Food and Nutrition expert in the planning of afterschool meals. This assistance is unheard of in El Sistema, which functions completely separately from the schools. El Sistema programs provide their own buildings for rehearsals, and the students have to travel from their schools to these núcleo locations every afternoon. In all matters, school is a completely separate entity that does not factor into El Sistema.

In addition to their partnership with the Baltimore City Public Schools, OrchKids maintains partnerships with the Peabody Institute of Music, the Baltimore School for the Arts, Arts Every Day, The Family League of Baltimore City, and the Lyric Opera House of Baltimore.¹⁰ Each of these partnerships provides some resource to OrchKids, such as sheet music, guidance for teachers and administrators, mentorship to the students, and broadening the performance experiences of the students.¹¹

¹⁰ OrchKids, "About: Community Partners," Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, <http://www.bsomusic.org/main.taf?p=9,5,1,9> (accessed July 8, 2011).

¹¹ Ibid.

Marin Alsop's vision for the BSO is to:

- “Represent the diversity of Baltimore’s communities.
- Engage with the people of Baltimore to become a robust and trusted community resource.
- Cultivate a love of and appreciation for music in all Maryland residents.
- Make our performances, programs, and activities accessible to all.”¹²

With such an inclusive vision for the symphony, her programs must be designed to reach out to all communities. Alsop and Trahey chose West Baltimore as the home of OrchKids because of its extreme poverty. The children who are enrolled in OrchKids are among the poorest in the city. Lockerman-Bundy Elementary School is in the 21223 zip code of Baltimore, and the majority of children in the program reside in that zip code as well. This neighborhood is considered to be in the “high violence stratum,” according to The MORE Project.¹³ Ninety-nine percent of the children at Lockerman-Bundy are African-American. Eighty-three percent of children at the school receive free meals, whereas the statewide average for free meals is only twenty-four percent. An additional five percent of the students at Lockerman-Bundy receive reduced lunch prices as compared to a seven

¹² OrchKids: Using Music as a Vehicle for Social Change. Long Range Plan, revised July 2009, p. 2, see Appendix A.

¹³ Michele Cooley-Strickland, Tanya J. Quille, Robert S. Griffin, Elizabeth A. Stuart, Catherine P. Bradshaw, and Debra Furr-Holden, “Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Low, Moderate, and High Violence: MORE Project Neighborhoods in Baltimore City based on Zip Code,” from “Community Violence and Youth: Affect, Behavior, Substance Use, and Academics,” *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2700237/> (accessed March 1, 2012).

percent statewide average.¹⁴ While the average household age and number of people are very close to the statewide averages, the income level is markedly lower. For an average Maryland household, \$60,339 was their income in 2004.¹⁵ In zip code 21223, the average income was \$21, 694—just one third of the state average.¹⁶ While the state of Maryland had an 8.1% poverty rate in 2008, 28.7% of 21223’s population was living below the poverty level. Perhaps what is most striking, however, is that over half of those households—14.5% of the population of 21,223—lives 50% below the poverty level.¹⁷ According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the 2008 poverty threshold for a family of four was \$21,200.¹⁸ Imagine then, that 14.5% of households in this neighborhood were living on \$10,600 per year for a family of four.

When driving down the streets in the neighborhood of Lockerman-Bundy Elementary School, one sees the row houses that Baltimore is known for, but here there are more with boarded up windows than those without. The people of the community sit outside on their front stoops at all hours of the day, due to the high levels of unemployment. When I entered the neighborhood, I was thankful that I was not alone. My colleague who was used to being in the area pointed out drug dealers, saying we need

¹⁴ “Lockerman Bundy Elementary School,” School Tree.org, <http://maryland.schooltree.org/public/Lockerman-Bundy-Elementary-038069.html> (accessed July 29, 2010).

¹⁵ “21223 Zip Code Detailed Profile,” City-Data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/zip/21223.html> (accessed July 29, 2010).

¹⁶ “21223 Zip Code Detailed Profile,” City-Data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/zip/21223.html> (accessed July 29, 2010).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, “The 2008 HHS Poverty Guidelines,” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/08poverty.shtml> (accessed July 29, 2010).

not linger in one place too long unless we wanted to be propositioned for a drug deal. Drugs, he explained, would be the most logical reason for white people to be in that neighborhood.

Many families in OrchKids have multiple children participating, and while I was visiting those children spoke of their other brothers and sisters. Older children come the school to pick up the younger ones. While some of the children did seem cared for, many were neglected. In the worst cases, the children came to school in the same clothes day after day, no matter how dirty they were. Some smelled of urine and filth that implied that no one was caring, or was able to care for their cleanliness and general well-being.

Vignette from the Author's Trip to Baltimore in 2009

When I went to visit OrchKids for the second time in December 2009, I brought with me a children's t-shirt from Baylor University, where I am currently employed as the bassoon professor. A little early for recruitment, perhaps, but I know our schools like for us to represent them when we are out in different communities. And, I thought it would be a nice gift for a child who is working hard in their program. This was something that I learned from my trip to Venezuela. The children are always rewarded when they are showing dedication and improvement. In Venezuela it is usually a nicer instrument, a trip to Caracas for a lesson, a solo with an orchestra, or something related to their music. But any reward is nice, so I brought a t-shirt for someone in Baltimore. But, when it came time to decide to whom the t-shirt should go, the reality of need was present, and I knew that this basic gift could mean so much to some children. I spoke with Dan Trahey, and we selected someone who had been dedicated and showed interest in the program, but also a boy who was from one of the direst home situations. I never imagined the relief and sadness that I would feel in giving a child something as basic as a clean shirt to wear.

Harriet Tubman Elementary was chosen as the first OrchKids núcleo¹⁹ due to its location in inner city Baltimore, and its principal who showed a passion for the program and a desire for partnership. One week before school began in the fall of 2008, Baltimore public schools decided to remove that principal from the school, leaving the OrchKids managers concerned that they would be working with an unsupportive new principal, or that they might have to find a new location for their program. This was the first of many struggles that OrchKids has encountered by working with the school system. The next obstacle was the closing of Harriet Tubman Elementary after the 2008-2009 school year. Despite the fact that the school district had assured the BSO that Tubman would be around for a long while, the school wasn't performing well enough to stay open. OrchKids had to find a new location and worried that the participants who had just completed their first year would no longer be in school together. This would have been an unfortunate loss of opportunity for those children, and administratively the program would have suffered as well. They would have had to start all over again with new participants, and would have lost a whole year's worth of statistics and experiences from which to build. These experiences built a high level of distrust in the Baltimore City Public Schools. The leaders of OrchKids learned in this first year that, though they depended on the BCPS, they ultimately had to be prepared to cope with any situation presented to them, and that any stability could be taken away at any point. Though BCPS

¹⁹ A núcleo is an individual community center within the System. There may be more than one per city, depending on the size, needs, and resources of each city or town. The group has its own instructors and ensembles that operate relatively independently. Those in Venezuela are a part of El Sistema, and therefore have shared pedagogy, values, and canon. El Sistema-based programs around the world often refer to themselves as núcleos, but they are not necessarily a part of a formal larger system.

supports OrchKids, their first concern is to take care of the needs of the schools. In such a low-achieving neighborhood, the schools are less secure, because their records are always under attack.

Fortunately, OrchKids was able to take all thirty of their first-year participants to their new location. In the subsequent years, they have grown considerably, both in children involved and in the number of locations. As of winter 2012, there are four sites for OrchKids:

- Lockerman-Bundy Elementary
- New Song Academy, the string program started in 2010. At New Song, afterschool activities are expected from every child. All children in the school stay until 5:30pm, so initiating OrchKids as one afterschool option was not as difficult to organize. Currently, Pre-K through first grade children are involved at New Song. They play only the violin, sing in choir, and take musicianship.
- The third school, Mary Winterling Elementary School, opened in the fall of 2011. Like the other locations, it started with only Pre-K through first grade and will continue as it welcomes newcomers each year.²⁰
- Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School No. 215, started its OrchKids núcleo in the winter of 2012. Like the other núcleos, it is starting small, with one class of pre-kindergarten.

²⁰ Tim Smith, "Baltimore Symphony's OrchKids program expands to a third school," *The Baltimore Sun*: Clef Notes and Drama Queens, October 24, 2011, http://weblogs.baltimoresun.com/entertainment/classicalmusic/2011/10/baltimore_symphonys_orchkids_p_2.html (accessed December 13, 2011).

OrchKids plans to create a “campus” out of the three schools since they are all in the same neighborhood within walking distance of one another. The hope is that the afterschool activities would be divided between the schools, and the students would go to whichever school was holding the activity in which they were to participate. For example, orchestra rehearsal would be at one school, bucket band²¹ and tutoring at another, and choir at the third. The children from each school would work together in OrchKids in the afternoons.²²

Highlandtown is the first núcleo in a different neighborhood. The Annie E. Casey Foundation has given OrchKids a large grant designated towards work in East Baltimore.²³ Trahey was nervous about the expansion when I spoke to him in October 2011. “I am worried that the addition will scatter our resources and hurt our momentum. However, orchestras at the Baltimore Symphony level don’t typically get this type of national funding, so this is a big deal. Hopefully, it will encourage other foundations to donate to us as well.”²⁴

Upon receipt of an updated long-term plan on March 10, 2012 from OrchKids, I learned that they plan to build on this expansion, despite Trahey’s initial hesitancy. In January of 2013, a second núcleo will be formed in East Baltimore. By 2015-2016, OrchKids will have núcleos in the four quadrants of inner-city Baltimore. Eventually,

²¹ Bucket band is a type of ensemble, to be explained under “Pedagogy.”

²² Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

²³ The Annie E. Casey Foundation sponsors East Baltimore Development Inc., a massive revitalization undertaking in an area north of the Johns Hopkins Medical Campus. <http://www.ebdi.org/about> (accessed November 9, 2011).

²⁴ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

they hope to have four núcleos in each quadrant with one school serving as the hub, or primary operating center, for each quadrant.

El Sistema

Economist and classical musician José Antonio Abreu started La Fundación del Estado para el Sistema Nacional de las Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles de Venezuela, known as El Sistema, in 1975.²⁵ Also referred to as FESNOJIV, El Sistema now supports over 300,000 children each year with free instruments and instruction. El Sistema is made up of núcleos, which, “in many cases, become centers promoting the educational, artistic and cultural activities of the communities.”²⁶ They form a complex and systematic network, currently educating the children through more than 150 youth orchestras and 70 children’s orchestras.²⁷

FESNOJIV is open to all children in Venezuela, starting as early as age two or three, and the primary targets are the poorest children who cannot afford musical training on their own. There are special ensembles designed for blind and deaf children to ensure that anyone can participate. The children meet for rehearsal for up to four hours a day, six days a week. The youngest start with basic musical skills such as clapping rhythms and singing simple songs. As they advance, they start learning an orchestral instrument. The

²⁵ Since the author starting writing the paper, FESNOJIV has been renamed the Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar. However, since it is still commonly recognized under its old name, this paper will maintain the use of its old acronym, FESNOJIV.

²⁶ FESNOJIV, “Núcleos,” Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela, Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Participación y Protección Social, <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/nucleos.html> (accessed December 12, 2008).

²⁷ FESNOJIV, “Núcleos,” Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela, Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Participación y Protección Social, <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/nucleos.html> (accessed December 12, 2008).

educational model of El Sistema is the orchestra. An orchestra is a large ensemble that depends on the collaboration of a group of people. The success of the orchestra depends on the contribution of each individual. The orchestra is seen as a representation of community. By being responsible to their núcleo, the children are learning to be responsible in their communities. Only orchestral instruments are provided because membership in the orchestra is a top priority.

Soon after they have begun studying their instrument, they are given the responsibility of teaching other children who have less experience. The priority to give back to the community is instilled as the children grow up. It is common for a college student or a professional who has been in El Sistema to continue his or her involvement as a teacher, even when employed in another field. Flautist Leonardo Augusto Perez participated in El Sistema as a child. Now an architect like his father, he also teaches at the Acarigua núcleo as a way of staying involved with music and giving back. There are incentives for his continued involvement in the program; he earns some extra money by teaching and gets to keep his flute given to him by FESNOJIV as long as he is teaching.²⁸

By emphasizing the social benefits provided by El Sistema, Abreu created a much larger support net than he could by promoting a typical music program. FESNOJIV is not just about music education. Abreu promises that classical music education will change the lives of the children involved. By studying this music in the community of the orchestra, Abreu claims they learn to work together, they learn that the greater whole is improved by their contribution, and they learn that they can set goals and achieve them.

²⁸ Leonardo Augusto Perez Quintero, interview by author, Acarigua, Venezuela, July 2009.

The teaching is all based on music, but the skills they gain create a pathway to a positive life off of the streets, with transferable skills and an improved concept of self-worth. El Sistema is supported through the government's Ministry of Social Welfare and Participation, rather than the Ministry of the Arts.²⁹ There have been seven changes in national governmental leadership since El Sistema's inception, and Abreu has convinced each of them that El Sistema betters Venezuelan society. By promoting the social benefits, Abreu has maintained consistent financial backing from the government. FESNOJIV's operating budget in 2010 was approximately \$120 million, and the Venezuelan government provided most of that.³⁰

When Abreu started the program in 1975, there were only two orchestras in all of Venezuela, and they were comprised almost entirely of European émigrés.³¹ Now, there are 180 núcleos across the country, in the small towns and the large cities. Each núcleo has at least one orchestra, and most have two or more. In addition to these student orchestras, there are many more professional orchestras. Caracas alone has five professional orchestras. Some are a part of the System; some are not. President Hugo Chavez has declared his support for the expansion of FESNOJIV, and has proclaimed his intention to expand it to reach one million children each year.³²

²⁹ Eric Booth, "A Visit to Venezuela," *Chamber Music*, vol. 25, no. 5 (September/October 2008): 134.

³⁰ Tricia Tunstall, *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012), 36.

³¹ Heidi Waleson, "Southern Youthquake," *Symphony*, March-April 2008, 29.

³² Heidi Waleson, "Southern Youthquake," *Symphony*, March-April 2008, 29.

El Sistema has gained noteworthy worldwide popularity in the last five years. The most advanced ensemble, the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra, toured the elite concert halls of Europe and the United States in 2007 and gained the enthusiastic support of some of the most respected conductors in the world such as Sir Simon Rattle, chief conductor and artistic director of the Berlin Philharmonic, and Claudio Abbado, conductor of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra.³³

Research

Very little academic writing is available on El Sistema or OrchKids. An extraordinary amount of newspaper articles and public interest stories have been written about El Sistema, but most of them are casual and intended to introduce the general public to the programs for the first time. Peer-reviewed scholarly writing about El Sistema is challenged by the lack of data and statistics kept by its administration.

Multiple conferences in the U.S. have been held to establish a community of educators and arts supporters who promote El Sistema, but published articles still remain scarce. Additionally, FESNOJIV is relatively new, being established in 1975, and OrchKids has only been in existence for four years. Time will allow for new theories and perspectives on the programs to develop, and for more articles to be published. One of the first academic papers discussing El Sistema was a 2007 Harvard undergraduate thesis, entitled “Orchestrating an ‘Affluence of Spirit’: Addressing Self-Esteem in Impoverished

³³ For more information on Simon Rattle, see: EMI Classics, “Sir Simon Rattle,” <http://www.emiclassics.com/artistbiography.php?aid=72> (accessed December 12, 2008); for more information on Claudio Abbado, see: Deutsche Grammophone, “Claudio Abbado,” http://www2.deutschegrammophon.com/artist/biography?ART_ID=ABBCL (accessed December 12, 2008).

Venezuelan Children through Music Education” by Jennifer Chang.³⁴ Chang argued, “poverty should not be tackled simply in terms of economic policy but may also be addressed in terms of its psychological-cultural effects.”³⁵ She states that, “high self-esteem is necessary for helping disadvantaged children achieve success,” and used FESNOJIV as a case study.³⁶

Several documentaries about El Sistema are available, including *Tocar y Luchar* and *El Sistema*, as well as two 60 Minutes segments. The second 60 Minutes segment featured OrchKids as well as El Sistema.³⁷

This document contains new information about El Sistema from the author’s visit to Venezuela, including interviews that highlight the opinions and experiences of students and teachers in El Sistema as well as ethnographies that provide the author’s understanding of the personal, cultural, and pedagogical values at play based on her observations.

³⁴ Jennifer Diana Mei-Lyn Chang, “Orchestrating an “Affluence of Spirit: Addressing Self-Esteem in Impoverished Venezuelan Children through Music Education” (undergraduate thesis, Harvard College, March 2007).

³⁵ Ibid., 8.

³⁶ Ibid., 7-8.

³⁷ *Tocar y Luchar*. DVD, directed by Alberto Arvelo (ExplorArt films, 2006).

Bob Simon, “El Sistema: Changing Lives Through Music,” CBS News: 60 Minutes, http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/04/11/60minutes/main4009335_page4.shtml (accessed December 13, 2008).

Bob Simon, “Gustavo Dudamel’s Musical Mission,” CBS News: 60 Minutes, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/05/14/60minutes/main6483731.shtml?tag=mncol;lst;1> (accessed July 12, 2011).

Articles about OrchKids are even more limited. There are several from the Baltimore Sun, as well as recent articles in the *School Band & Orchestra* magazine and *Symphony* magazine.³⁸ Most of the information about OrchKids provided in this paper comes directly from the author's observations or the program directors themselves in the form of interviews and conversations. These interviews form an oral history of El Sistema and OrchKids, and will be included both throughout the paper. All research is approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina Greensboro.

The broader topics of personal and social identity and community will be developed in this paper along with subtopics including: globalization, modernity,

³⁸ Eliahu Sussman, "Music as a Vehicle for Social Change: Mark Churchill and El Sistema USA," *School Band & Orchestra*, January 2011, 24-30.

Rebecca Winzenried, "Bridging the Gap," *Symphony*, Summer 2011, 34-41.
http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/symphonyonline/Summer_2011/#/38/OnePage (accessed July 25, 2011).

Ann Drinan, "Baltimore Symphony Performs 'OrchKids Nation,'" Polyphonic.org: The Orchestra Musician Forum, June 13, 2011, <http://www.polyphonic.org/article.php?id=246> (accessed July 12, 2011).

Mary Carole McCauley "A big stage for a small orchestra: Marin Alsop and the BSO put young pupils in spotlight as part of their OrchKids program," *The Baltimore Sun*, March 30, 2011, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2011-03-30/entertainment/bs-ae-bso-orchkids-20110330_1_orchkids-program-dan-trahey-marin-alsop (accessed July 12, 2011).

Tim Smith, "Baltimore Symphony celebrates 'inner child' with OrchKids, Corigliano, Prokofiev," *The Baltimore Sun*: Clef Notes and Drama Queens, April 1, 2011, http://weblogs.baltimoresun.com/entertainment/classicalmusic/2011/04/baltimore_symphony_celebrates.html (accessed July 12, 2011).

Tim Smith, "BSO expands OrchKids program: Orchestra's education initiative spreads to New Song Academy," *The Baltimore Sun*, February 10, 2011, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2011-02-10/entertainment/bs-ae-bso-orchkids-20110210_1_orchkids-harriet-tubman-elementary-lockerman-bundy-elementary (accessed July 12, 2011).

Tim Smith, "OrchKids to receive \$1 million gift: The money will go toward funding more teachers, musical instruments and an additional administrator for the program," *The Baltimore Sun*, December 09, 2009, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2009-12-09/entertainment/bal-orchkids-gift-1209_1_orchkids-million-gift-bso (accessed July 12, 2011).

imagined identity and community, popular nationalism, and anti-culturalism. Those topics will be introduced here and applied to OrchKids and El Sistema. The study focused primarily on theories from Benedict Anderson, Arjun Appadurai, Martin Stokes, Thomas Turino, and Jean-Francois Bayart.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* is the seminal treatise on the formation of national identities and "imagined" identity.³⁹ Anderson's concepts will be used in this paper, considering such topics as the relationship between Venezuelan nationalism and El Sistema, and the "imagined identity" of the global community of classical musicians.

Arjun Appadurai introduces a postmodernist perspective on globalism in his "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," from *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*.⁴⁰ He states that globalization has created a broader set of identity-forming realities called "imaginary landscapes". In our post-modern world these interconnected "landscapes" are as important, or more, than older categories of nation and ethnicity. El Sistema uses a European art form, and yet at the same time has found a way to build national pride. Media has promoted the Venezuelan identity of El Sistema even further, both locally and internationally.

Martin Stokes' book, *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, uses nine different examples to show a broad spectrum of how music is used to

³⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

⁴⁰ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

create our sense of belonging, reinforce our identity, our ethnicity, and our nationality.⁴¹ He thinks that “ethnicities are to be understood in terms of the construction, maintenance and negotiation of boundaries” (drawing primarily from Barth’s *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*), and that music is one way that boundaries are established.⁴²⁴³ I will consider the many boundaries that are created, broken, realigned and broadened in OrchKids that influence the perspectives of its students.

Thomas Turino’s article, “Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations,” uses specific case studies showing how music is able to establish national identity in Latin America.⁴⁴ Turino shows examples of populist nationalism, where the elite of society create a sense of belonging for the masses that is powerful enough to make them feel as a part of the society, and therefore the nation.

French intellectual Jean-Francois Bayart offers an “anti-culturalist” argument in his book, *The Illusion of Cultural Identity*. He argues that we choose culture rather than culture forming us. Culture does not have unlimited power over us; we have the power to choose our own cultural identity. His position helps my study of OrchKids and El Sistema in two ways. First, it emphasizes the individual’s power to choose his identity.

⁴¹ Martin Stokes, ed., *Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994).

⁴² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴³ Boundaries included in Stokes book are: Performance and Place, Ethnicity, Identity and Nation-State, Hybridity and Difference, Ethnicity, Class and Media, and Gender and Identity.

⁴⁴ Thomas Turino, “Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations,” *Latin American Music Review* 24, no. 2 (Autumn-Winter 2003): 169-209.

Second, it helps evaluate which cultural values are specific to El Sistema and which values transcend Venezuelan culture and can be applied to other cultures.

CHAPTER III

PEDAGOGY

Baltimore

OrchKids had thirty children enrolled in 2008-2009, and has grown in four years to 420 children. The children receive musical training during the school day starting as early as pre-kindergarten. Though all students enrolled in Lockerman-Bundy take some music classes, those who elect to be members of OrchKids get additional music classes twice a week during the school day. The activities continue in the afternoon for grades one and higher, when they receive a healthy meal, tutoring and homework time, and multiple types of musical training.

Early childhood music education specialist Dr. Eric Rasmussen leads the school-day music classes, which focus on music fundamentals such as ear training.⁴⁵ Rasmussen explained some of the concepts behind the exercises performed during the author's visit. The children were singing, clapping, and moving, and seemed to be enjoying themselves thoroughly. Rasmussen showed that they were learning mixed meters by singing songs that switch from 6/8 to 7/8, or from duple to complex meters. They were learning to hear the difference between major and minor keys, but classifying them into color groups rather than learning the music theory terms just yet. For example, on that particular day, the students decided that the colors would be red, black, and blue (conveniently the colors

⁴⁵ While El Sistema does not provide music activities in the children's schools, they do incorporate music fundamentals classes in all of their núcleos

of dry-erase markers that worked). Rasmussen would name a familiar song, and the children would decide if the song was “red” (major), “black” (minor), or “blue” (a song without a key, such as a chant or rap). The exercise that was most impressive to me was the “Roots” game. In this game, the children would hold their hand up in the air. When the basic harmony for the song was tonic, they would hold up one finger in the air, and when the harmony moved to dominant, they would hold up five fingers! This was spectacular. Four and five-year-olds were learning to hear chord progressions that many students in the U.S. do not learn until college. The second-year OrchKids (primarily second graders) were learning to recognize secondary dominants, subdominants, and even more advanced chordal harmony.

Afterschool activities for OrchKids met three times per week in the 2009-2010 school year. Monday was a “non-music” afternoon, where the children go to snack time and then tutoring, but there were no musical activities. It is very important to the directors that OrchKids children have time to do their homework so that they don’t get behind in school. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the children rotated between different activities. All of the children participated in bucket band, which was their first ensemble experience in OrchKids. In bucket band, each child receives a big orange bucket and two drumsticks. They listen to rhythms played by their teacher and repeat the rhythms as a group. This is an inexpensive and fun way to introduce rhythms, playing together, and listening.

During their first year participating in the OrchKids after-school program, the first graders learn about the different instrument families represented in the symphony orchestra. They learn how each instrument family produces sound, what it sounds like,

and how the instruments function in the orchestra. They spend eight weeks on trumpet as the representative for the brass, eight weeks on clarinet for woodwinds, and eight weeks on violin for strings. During each introductory period, they learn about all of the instruments in each family even though they don't get to play them all. Interestingly, the children do not have an introductory period for percussion instruments.

Though bucket band is an early and ongoing part of OrchKids, the students are not encouraged to be percussionists. Trahey explained that this was because he did not want a room full of percussionists that would overpower the ensemble. In this instance they are making choices to serve the needs of the orchestra rather than the desires of the children. Percussion instruments could be used in music genres across-the-board, and especially in the hip-hop, rhythm and blues, and jazz styles that might be valued more commonly in the West Baltimore community. While acknowledging the historical and cultural predisposition towards percussion through the formation of the bucket band, at this point the OrchKids leaders are not trying to encourage percussion beyond that level.

At the end of this first year, the children get to choose which instrument they want to play. The instructors help the children to find the perfect match. That decision is based primarily on the interest of the child. However, other factors that help to make the decision are the child's ability to articulate the interest, a timbre preference test, the OrchKids orchestra's instrumentation needs, the availability of instruments, the size of the child, and a discussion with all of the teachers who have taught the child.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Daniel Trahey, e-mail message to author, January 21, 2012.

In the second year of the afterschool program, the different instrument families begin to meet separately, with one teacher leading them in a group lesson. Orchestra rehearsal takes the place of the instrument exploratory sessions. By the time the participants are in the second grade, they know about all of the instruments of the orchestra, can hear chord progressions, and are participating in orchestra rehearsals.

The administrators of OrchKids have created multiple rubrics and plans that outline their goals for their participants. The musical goals start as simply as, “Sing alone and with others,” and just four years later include, “Speak about the process of learning music,” and “Teach privately and in group classes.”⁴⁷ The leaders’ hope is that the students’ transformation will not only be a musical one. There are specifically laid out social outcomes that the OrchKids staff hopes for as well. These goals touch the areas of academics, behavior, communication/social awareness, family, leadership, and mentorship.⁴⁸ OrchKids teachers and staff monitor the behavior of the students, and surveys are conducted for the students, parents and teachers every semester. The results are analyzed and compiled into a report. The “OrchKids Evaluation Report 2010-2011” is found in Appendix B.

Now in year four, the pedagogical plan has progressed. OrchKids will naturally have to expand its methods as it grows. OrchKids meets six days a week now, and what once was a snack time after school is now a “full-on meal. They get a plate of hot food, like baked chicken or taco night. We try to have as few ingredients as possible—real

⁴⁷ See Appendix A for the Long-Range Plan as of July 2009.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

food, not a bunch of chemicals and processed stuff.”⁴⁹ Snack time used to happen right after school let out. Now, the children go to an activity first and then have supper at the school before going to their second activity. This later mealtime allows for it to function as a real dinner. The children will not have to eat when they go home, which helps their families’ food budgets.

Levels have now been established that are loosely based around the children’s grade and their start year. The levels are:

Pre-K: Baby Bach
 Kindergarten: Mozart
 1st grade: Ms. Marin (the name that the children call Marin Alsop)
 2nd grade: Beethoven
 3rd grade: Tchaikovsky
 4th grade: Mahler

The names given to the different levels of the group, similar to the names of orchestras in the Montalbán núcleo in Caracas, demonstrates the values of the leaders of OrchKids.

The names of composers in the classical tradition have become symbolic of elitist power, which will be discussed later in the paper under “Religion of Music” on pages 91-94.

That Marin Alsop is the only namesake of a class level at OrchKids who is living and who is not a composer demonstrates the allegiance that the OrchKids program has to its founder.

When OrchKids started, children from multiple grade levels began at the same time, especially from families with multiple kids. They keep all of the children together based on their experience level, not just their grade. “Also,” says Trahey, “even though

⁴⁹ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

our afterschool program begins with the Ms. Marins, we do have some Pre-Ks or kindergarteners in the afterschool program. Usually that's if they have siblings who will be there already. But, the Pre-Ks can only stay after school if they are able to make it until 6:30 at night."⁵⁰ OrchKids tries to support the families in the community, and has taken in children of all elementary ages since the beginning if they had siblings in OrchKids, as one means of showing their support.

The levels help with organization, but they have helped to deal with behavior problems as well. If a "Mahler" child starts to misbehave, they might move them back to a lower level until their behavior improves. "Usually a day or two of paddy cake with the Ms. Marins is all it takes to improve their behavior! They are ready to get back with the kids at their own level."⁵¹

On Mondays and Fridays, only the three most advanced groups (Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Mahler) participate in afterschool activities. All levels go to tutoring, then dinner, and then Bucket Band rehearsals on Monday, and then group lessons and ensembles on Friday. The oldest students have the opportunity for individual practice during Bucket Band time, as determined by their instructors. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the "Ms. Marin" group attends afterschool activities as well. On these days, all levels participate in choir. Additionally, the Ms. Marins have their instrument exploratory classes, and the upper-level students have group lessons and wind or string ensemble rehearsals. The full weekly schedule is available in Appendix C.

⁵⁰ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

⁵¹ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

In a 2011 interview with Dan Trahey, he indicated that the OrchKids children are further ahead musically than he and the staff had anticipated. “The “Mahlers” have started to read music,” he said, “but their early focus on ear training has paid off.”⁵² Hilary Hahn, a famous violin soloist, was hired to play with the BSO on September 10, 2011 for their annual Celebration Gala. For this concert, Hahn was to play the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with members of the BSO, as well as a piece with the OrchKids orchestra and bucket band. “In preparation for the event,” Trahey explained, “the strings and winds had rehearsed their parts separately. When the ensemble combined together in order to rehearse with Hilary, they realized that the string parts were in the key of G, but the winds had learned theirs in F!! The wind players were able to transpose on the spot, right away, because of the emphasis on ear training in their classes.”⁵³

The ability to adapt and use their aural skills to transpose keys so quickly is a credit to the pedagogy of OrchKids. Most classically trained wind players in the U.S. go through the majority of their careers without playing by ear. Typical training in the U.S. develops a dependence on sheet music. OrchKids is developing well-trained and well-rounded musicians, not simply technicians on instruments. This approach, though seen in other programs such as Suzuki training, was determined based on El Sistema’s example. In Venezuela, even the youngest students use “fixed do” solfege extensively. That aspect of the students’ ear training was superior to most college music majors in the U.S.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

OrchKids is mature enough by year four that they are beginning to make plans for when their students leave elementary school. Specifically, they must find ways to keep the most advanced students challenged and engaged. One way of doing this is by forming partnerships with pre-existing youth orchestras. Trahey claims, “As of now, we already have 8 kids who are participating in the Peabody Prep⁵⁴ early middle school band program, in addition to OrchKids. For now, one obstacle in having more participate is transportation. Only those who are able to get there can participate. Eventually we plan to have a means of shuttling more students to the program.”⁵⁵ He envisions having a 6-12th grade community center for OrchKids someday.

No matter how OrchKids grows and changes, its leaders will maintain these ideals in order to keep them on track:

Ideals of El Sistema through the Eyes of OrchKids⁵⁶

1. Passion over Precision
2. Starting Early
3. Intensity
4. All playing together
5. Ownership/Mentorship
6. Community
7. Consistency
8. Audiation before Visualization
9. Spontaneity and Flexibility
10. Joy

⁵⁴ Peabody Preparatory, “About Peabody Preparatory,” <http://peabody.jhu.edu/preparatory> (accessed December 13, 2011).

⁵⁵ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

⁵⁶ Daniel Trahey, e-mail message to author, October 12, 2011.

Trahey determined these as the core values, stating, and “This is my list that helps us guide everything we do with OrchKids.”⁵⁷

El Sistema

Though every núcleo in FESNOJIV functions relatively independently, FESNOJIV still maintains many across-the-board standards in pedagogy. The differences in teaching practices between the núcleos tend not to be due to different ideologies, but to the resources that each director has available. Roberto Zambrano, director of núcleo Acarigua, and my host while in Acarigua and Caracas, says

There is a political system or idea that they all share: for example, schedules, the length of the rehearsal or class time, the method of choosing repertoire. At the international legal level, there is an active constitutional system that allows all this to be organized so that the education received is the same. However, the way in which each one can express it, the teaching method one chooses, depends on the núcleo. There are many common aspects; however, each teacher adds something different.⁵⁸

Every location that I visited in Venezuela stressed communal learning, ear training, and shared repertoire “standards”. As percussion student Antonio Rivero explained, “Without *Danzon*, it’s not an orchestra in Venezuela.”⁵⁹ *Danzon No. 2*, by Mexican composer Arturo Márquez, has become a standard encore piece for every orchestra in El Sistema. Though Marquez is not Venezuelan, the Latin-American style of the work lends itself to

⁵⁷ Daniel Trahey, e-mail message to author, January 21, 2012.

⁵⁸ Roberto Zambrano, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 24, 2009.

⁵⁹ Antonio Rivero, interview by author, Acarigua, Venezuela, June 18, 2009.

boisterous dancing from the orchestra at the end of their concerts. It has become an anthem of pride in El Sistema, and even of Venezuela, though its heritage is Mexican.

Rafael Elster had more to say about the differences from núcleo to núcleo:

. . . in Venezuela there are not two núcleos equal [to] each other. Because the people in neighborhoods change—and the cities change. Won't be the same the núcleo from Guanare and any núcleo from Caracas. [sic] It's [a] totally different environment, and is [a] totally different approach. I can give you the recipe, but it's not the same cooking in this kitchen as cooking in your kitchen. It will be different. So you have to make the adaptations.⁶⁰

The first city that I visited in Venezuela during my trip in the summer of 2009 was Acarigua. I was there with a group of musicians from the U.S. called the Archipelago Project. A *seminario*, or weeklong clinic, had been organized so that we might be able to teach as many children as possible during our stay. Multiple núcleos attended the *seminario*, and my friends and I were the primary instructors for the week. Therefore, I could not observe the typical schedule or teaching methods for one particular núcleo. However, I was able to interview students to find out more about their daily lives, and could observe generalities about how they typically rehearsed.

The youngest children were in the choir. This is typical in El Sistema. Children often participate in choir and learn to play the recorder before they are given a more expensive instrument. This way, they are able to learn music fundamentals, participate in a large ensemble, and develop ear training in order to prepare them to join the orchestra

⁶⁰ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

with the older children. Flutist Juan Pablo Alfonso explains his early experience with El Sistema:

I was interested in learning to play the keyboard (piano), but then I came see the orchestra it caught my interest. I also had two cousins who had started orchestra and I asked them about it. I liked it and I went to the office, met Roberto, all the personnel, obtained more information, and I quickly learned to read music. I did not know how to read music before this. I enlisted myself, professors offered me help in solfege, then flute, orchestral technique, then they gave me an instrument. Little by little, one grows in the núcleo.⁶¹

Alfonso's experience is typical. As a student accomplishes more, he is given more reward. Alfonso's younger sister, also a flute player, described her own experience in Acarigua: "They always start with choir and recorder, and depending on how fast they improve they graduate up to a new instrument. I was in the choir for about a year and a half before starting the flute."⁶²

Flute teacher Leonardo Augusto Perez described the typical weekly schedule for the Acarigua núcleo. "We have rehearsals all the week from Mon-Fri. Saturdays I have flute players all for myself."⁶³ When asked if they only had sectionals on Saturdays, he replied, "Yes, and I have the opportunity to give one hour a week to each of them...All week the orchestra, Saturday, flutes only. All the instruments have sectionals." Trying to understand this method of community learning, I asked, "And how do the students learn

⁶¹ Juan Pablo Alfonso, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 24, 2009.

⁶² Aymara Alfonso, interview by author, Acarigua, Venezuela, June 17, 2009.

⁶³ Leonardo Augusto Perez, interview by author, Acarigua, Venezuela, June 20, 2009.

in orchestra rehearsals? It seems like the younger students could get overwhelmed.

Besides Saturday, the entire time is with the big group?” “No,” Leonardo explained,

We don’t have enough people to do two orchestras, so everybody’s in. Usually on Mondays and Tuesdays the little kids have solfege class so they are not in the group, but on Wednesday through Friday they join in with everyone else. But in other places they have 5 orchestras . . . pre-child, for children, juvenile, professional. And some have so many that they have 2 juvenile orchestras. But here we don’t have too many people so we are all together.⁶⁴

Acarigua, like most núcleos, meets six days a week for 3-4 hours. Additionally, the orchestra rehearsal gets priority. This is where they build community, and where the young players learn by sitting next to the more experienced players. Acarigua is different from other núcleos in larger cities with more professional musicians. Because they do not have teachers readily available, instruction is limited. Because instructors are limited, the students are somewhat more limited as well.

When the Archipelago Project group returned home from Venezuela, I stayed to visit several other núcleos. Núcleo Montalbán is one of the largest and most significant in Caracas. At the time of my visit it had 1,050 children participating, and 500 more were applying for the next year. There was a huge mountain on one side of the highway, and the music conservatory was on the other. The building served both the collegiate level music conservatory and the núcleo. It was surrounded by a chain-link fence, complete with barbed wire around the top. There were children everywhere, playing in the courtyard as soon as we walked through the gate. I went into the offices of the school, and felt as if I were going to the principal’s office. There, I met the director of

⁶⁴ Leonardo Augusto Perez, interview by author, June 20, 2009, as translated by Felicitas Sommer.

Montalbán. He was incredibly nice and welcoming, and happy for me to visit. Already trusted friends with my guide, Ollantay Velasquez, he quickly encouraged us to explore the school. He was preoccupied with the challenges of the day, and stressed the large number of students that he had to manage. We thanked him, and left him to his work.

I was able to see every class level of the núcleo. The two and three-year-olds were learning to play the recorder. The teacher had written rhythms on the board, with solfege underneath for the pitches. In the next room, the choir of five and six-year-olds was rehearsing. The teacher was working on posture and performance stance and their unison voices sounded so sweet!

Next I saw the youngest orchestra, called the Bach Orchestra. It was comprised mainly of strings and brass, and the students looked like they were about eight years old.

The Beethoven Orchestra was next. The winds and brass were in sectionals, rehearsing *Danzon*, the standard El Sistema encore piece. These kids were about eleven and twelve, and they already played with great tone and confidence. All of the rehearsals were very serious, with the exception of the 2-year-olds. The teachers had very high expectations for their students.

Next, I went to see the training orchestra on the top floor of the building. The ages varied a lot more here, and it appeared to be the first orchestra for all students. I was not sure if this orchestra fed into the Bach or Beethoven orchestras, or if it was for older students to prepare them before joining an orchestra with other older students. All of the rehearsals mentioned above took place in one building. Every room was filled with

children, and this is where University-level conservatory meets, too. There was constant noise during my entire visit.

Lastly, we went next door to hear the Youth Orchestra of Caracas. This was a new orchestra recently created to replace the Teresa Carreño Orchestra. Teresa Carreño now rehearses at the Sede Nuevo, or new headquarters, and they are quickly becoming as respected as the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra. In fact, as the SBYO Orchestra B ages out of the “youth orchestra” stage, the Teresa Carreño will begin touring and representing El Sistema around the world. The Youth Orchestra of Caracas, which I saw at Montalbán, was comprised of very talented students, mainly in their early to late teens. It has 12 flutes and only 2 bassoons. This is one thing that separates El Sistema from orchestras in other parts of the world. They welcome larger sections. If they have the players and the instruments, they welcome involvement. Most El Sistema orchestras that you see fill up the stage as much as possible. I noticed in the rehearsal of the Youth Orchestra of Caracas that some of the younger strings weren’t getting everything. But as I looked around, I realized that those younger players were sharing a stand with stronger players. Rather than putting the younger students in the back of the orchestra, they are paired with a mentor who can help them to improve during rehearsals.

The next núcleo that I visited was in Los Teques, a suburb of Caracas. These students were mainly in the middle class, much like suburban class in the U.S. They were happy, well dressed, had braces and cell phones. This núcleo was larger than the one on Acarigua, and smaller than Montalbán. They have an infantile and juvenile orchestra

(children and youth), as well as a professional orchestra through FESNOJIV, the Miranda State Orchestra. The stages of learning in this núcleo were:

- 2 levels of initiation: kindergarten and 5-6 years
- Preparatory level
- Grades 1-4
- Advanced

In Los Teques, they do not start with choir. They do, however, have classes every day that involve singing, rhythms, conducting, and solfege. From 3-5 pm they have musicianship classes, and from 5-7 pm they have rehearsal.

I worked with the bassoons alone on the second day. They were excited to have new duets and etudes, and we worked mainly on finding proper fingerings. These bassoonists, though only a thirty minute drive from Caracas, did not have access to sheet music, etude books, or teachers that could give them proper instruction. Americans react with amazement when they hear that the Venezuelan government funds FESNOJIV because we dream of having government-funded arts. However, funding does not solve everything. The resources are not available there like they are in the U.S. Even the middle class kids in El Sistema do not have access to things like reeds and reed making equipment. Everywhere I went during my visit students would ask for copies of any music I had, as well as for cane and reeds. They were desperate for any supplies I had that I could share. In the U.S., however, resources are virtually unlimited. Though leaders are always concerned about raising funds to operate their programs, finding instruments and supplies seems to be relatively easy. Large corporations such as Music and Arts have

donated instruments to OrchKids, and individuals seem to be happy to donate instruments that they no longer use.

Another resource that many were desperate for in Venezuela was knowledge. El Sistema has grown so quickly that it cannot provide qualified teachers for every instrument in every location. This was, perhaps, more noticeable to me as a bassoonist. Bassoon is typically a less commonly played instrument, with fewer numbers than instruments like flute and violin. Therefore, more remote locations cannot afford to employ a bassoonist full time to teach their students. The best students in the remote locations are bussed to Caracas for lessons once a week. But there are many who do not get that opportunity. Everywhere I went núcleo leaders were happy to accept my assistance with their bassoon students.

Vignette from the Author's Trip to Cumaná

The last núcleo that I visited was in Cumaná. I traveled by bus from Caracas to Cumaná in the middle of the night. After freezing for several hours (I was one of the few on the bus without a blanket), I arrived in Cumaná at 5:30am. My host, Eleazar Yeguez, found me at the bus stop and dropped me off at my hotel, where I slept for an hour, before getting up and preparing for a marathon day of teaching bassoonists from the area. From 9am-12pm and 3-6pm I worked with six bassoonists from the Venezuelan state Sucre. Three were from Cumaná, and three from other núcleos. My main function while visiting to observe was to teach bassoon. Cumaná is on the coast of Venezuela, far from Caracas. They do not have as many professional musicians in this part of the country, and so they were excited to have a professional bassoonist in town. My students ranged from 11-30 years old. The most accomplished bassoonist, Edgardo Campos, had been traveling to Caracas for lessons that year, but he was 19 and that was his first year of lessons. Most of the education provided in Sucre is from within the orchestra.

The students develop strong ensemble skills, despite the fact that they have no one to teach them the specifics about their instrument. String players typically have someone who specializes in their instruments to teach them technique, but many of the students are left to their own devices. To have a violinist without an

education degree in charge of teaching an entire symphony orchestra of beginners would be looked down upon in the U.S. However, with El Sistema, getting the children in the orchestra, building passion about music and giving them a safe place to learn is more important than having the proper teachers in place. On the occasion that someone does travel in who has that knowledge, though, the instructors are eager to provide an opportunity for their students.

The bassoon students were eager to learn, though as we proceeded through the day I realized that they were not accustomed to the same type of master class that I was teaching. I was asking the students to play things individually, so that I could hear them better. In a typical American master class, the students listen and take notes while the teacher works one-on-one with a participant. These bassoonists were used to playing all the time as a group. They had a hard time paying attention and sitting still while others were playing for the class, so I had to adapt my teaching methods. After a while, the class became more like a sectional, so that everyone could play together.

We warmed up with 5-note scale segments, and I learned quickly that most of their instruments were broken or in need of maintenance, and that they had never done scale work before. We also did warm-ups from Christopher Weait's warm-up book, played Boismortier duets, and worked on the 1812 Overture (mainly its Gb scales) for their rehearsal, Milde Scale Studies, the Vivaldi e minor Concerto, the Mozart Concerto, and reed making! It was quite an intense session, like bassoon boot camp. I worked with the students for two and a half days, and also got to observe regular orchestra rehearsals.

I spent individual time working with Edgardo Campos as well. He was eager to learn as much as possible from me. We went over reed making quite a bit, but he explained that obtaining the cane was the most difficult part of the process. I left him with all of the cane that I had. We also worked privately on the Mozart Bassoon Concerto. In the next room, the orchestra was rehearsing, and there was no sound barrier. We could hear the whole orchestra, the fan was blowing to bring the temperature down, and the windows to the outside were open. It was a makeshift situation, but Edgardo was determined to make the most of my time there.

The Cumaná núcleo had over 400 students playing in an infantile (children's) and juvenile (youth) orchestra and a choir. In this núcleo, all students start out in the choir. Sucre is the poorest state in Venezuela, but by this point in my trip, I realized that I could not tell who was poor and who was rich here. Everyone seemed fed and loved and happy, and they all had instruments given to them by El Sistema. The only students that seemed to have decent resources were those in the top orchestras rehearsing at the Sede Nuevo in Caracas. The subtleties of who had

wealth and who did not was lost on me. Perhaps that is part of the joy and the social success of El Sistema. It brings everyone to an even playing field.

CHAPTER IV

FUNDING AND REGULATIONS

Funding

One big difference between El Sistema and El Sistema-based programs in other countries are their sources of funding. While El Sistema is funded primarily through the Venezuelan government's Ministry of Social Welfare and Participation, most other programs of its nature are privately funded. OrchKids is no exception. The affiliation that OrchKids has with the Baltimore Symphony helped it to start on solid financial ground. An organization the size of the BSO already knows how to raise funds, how to advertise, and how to set a budget. Previous administrative director of OrchKids Hilary Hahn explained the BSO's help in building political allies for OrchKids:

Working with the people in the BSO, to help make those ties...internally as well as externally is really important. And that's one of the benefits of being part of a larger organization as well. That you've got institutional history, and people who have been here for a long time who have those ties who can introduce me to everybody I need to know, and over time make those bonds with those people and collectively form a plan. You know, with the Maryland Arts Council or those larger institutions that are good at lobbying at the state level, and using them as a resource. So that's one angle of what I do.⁶⁵

However, one surprise for the BSO has been that the donors for OrchKids have been people who have not donated money to the Symphony in the past. People who are drawn

⁶⁵ Hilary Hahn, interview by author, December 17, 2009.

to OrchKids are those who typically give philanthropically to social causes rather than to the arts. Hahn explains:

This is such a unique program because it's not strictly the BSO, it's not just classical music funding, and it's not just education of music. It's a social initiative. There are a lot of humanitarian aspects to what we do. We are looking at definitely Baltimore city and state of Maryland foundations and corporations that support those kinds of initiatives-music education, the orchestra. But what we are finding is that most of our donors are coming from a base that we've never gotten before because of the social aspect of what we are doing.⁶⁶

In addition to looking for local private donors and smaller foundations, OrchKids has been working towards applications to larger foundations from its beginning.

It's been interesting, and we're still in the process of laying the foundation for some national foundations. Some REALLY big ones-Abell, and Ford and Casey, some really big foundations with a potential for multi-year pledges and things like that of a substantial nature. It's hard, because we are in the early stages and we are just starting assessments, and a lot of the bigger national foundations that are involved in social education programs require a history, they want to know that you are grounded and have a kind of measurable, kind of a tangible track record. And so, what we are doing right now at this moment is cultivating. We are letting them know that we are here, and that we are planning on applying, so that they are keeping an eye on what we are doing.⁶⁷

The interview was held with Hahn in December of 2009. The organization's recordkeeping has provided the necessary results. OrchKids was awarded a large grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation in 2011. OrchKids continues to monitor progress

⁶⁶ Hillary Hahn, interview by author, Baltimore, Maryland, December 17, 2009.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

made by the children, including attendance records, test scores, behavioral differences and musical skill, all to paint a clear picture of its successes.

Financial stability for OrchKids seems to depend on two major factors: 1. Continued “buzz” in the community created by radio shows, newspaper articles, and OrchKids performances at events around Baltimore and 2. Careful recordkeeping to provide statistical proof of the progress made by the children. With these two factors in hand, the organization will continue to receive private donations and be eligible for foundational support.

Having public figures to promote the program helps in creating the “buzz” mentioned above as well. Those public figures could be the leaders themselves, if their personalities draw the public in, or they could be people from outside of the program who believe in the cause and are willing to speak up for it. In Baltimore, they have both. The most famous advocate for the program is its creator, Marin Alsop.

. . . She’s our biggest advocate. She’s always willing to go on meetings and initial calls with us, to say, this is our program, this is what we’re doing, this is why it’s great, and this is why we want you to watch us, and this is how we want to apply for funding in the future.⁶⁸

In addition to Alsop, OrchKids has Dan Trahey. Comfortable in the public eye, Dan is happy to do public speaking, to organize photoshoots and filming, and to do radio shows. He also understands the importance of bringing the students of OrchKids to the public. Recently, Marc Steiner interviewed Trahey for his show

⁶⁸ Hillary Hahn, interview by author, Baltimore, Maryland, December 17, 2009.

on WEAA 88.9FM radio in Baltimore.⁶⁹ He brought with him four of the OrchKids students, who were able to speak about their experiences in the program. While the students' public speaking skills were unpolished, they were each able to express different aspects of OrchKids, and to give a "face" to the program. The public was able to hear from the children themselves. Additionally, this process gives the students the experience of public speaking, which they will be able to continue to develop as they grow up in OrchKids.

In order to gain recognition and receive awards from the larger foundations, OrchKids has been very deliberate with the types of information it tracks. From the beginning, they were advised by advocates with experience in non-profit fundraising on how to keep the right statistics to prove OrchKids' social value. Hillary Hahn explained that after targeting the institutions that offered grants they wanted to apply for, they would make a four-year plan for how they will show the organization their merit.

And then, once you get them, there is the stewardship. Making sure they get the assessments and then making sure they are informed of the programs...how it's growing, how it's improving and things like that.

In 2009, most of OrchKids funding had come from private foundations, such as the Family League of Baltimore.

And a lot of foundations that are of the mindset to give to a program like this are our resources as well. They give us lots of helpful hints as it were,

⁶⁹ "The Mark Steiner Show," December 14, 2011, <http://www.steinershow.org/radio/the-marc-steiner-show/december-14-2011-segment-2> (accessed December 15, 2011).

about, have you done background checks on all of your teachers? Do you have someone who is CPR certified? Do you have a resource officer on campus? Do you have contracts for all of your teachers that outline their pay schedule?

. . . They are the ones that are helping us get all of our information and data collected in an organized way that's preparing us to present to bigger foundations. It's a lot of work right now, and a lot of paper work. And Nick [Skinner] does a lot of that. Because he's tracking numbers and attendance and behavior of the students every day. His role is SO important. It could not be done without him.⁷⁰

While working with the BSO has its advantages, it also presents certain challenges in fundraising as well.

And the challenge of getting funding, especially from individuals is that you don't want to take away funding from the general operating fund of the symphony. So, if you are cultivating people who are already subscribers and donors, you have to make it very clear that you are asking for additional, above and beyond their normal giving. And, if they are not willing to do that, can they lay out their Rolodex for you and invite some friends who they think might not be interested in giving to the symphony as an arts form, but might be interested in this branch of social education, using music education.⁷¹

Another important aspect in the stability of a non-profit El Sistema program in the U.S. is the promise of longevity. Donors will be more likely to contribute if they are confident that it will still be around five years from now. In addition to the generous donation made by Alsop in 2008, OrchKids was given

this great one million dollar donation from Bob Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker. And what their money is doing, is giving \$250,000 every year for the next 4 years. Half of that is going into our operating budget, what we need to make the

⁷⁰ Hillary Hahn, interview by author, Baltimore, Maryland, December 17, 2009.

⁷¹ Ibid.

program run every year, and half of that is going to build a little endowment for OrchKids. So, \$125,000 every year for the next 4 years is going into working reserves. So, if in a particular season, take for instance last season, say that was year 5 for us, and funding was down because of the national economy, that we're going to have a backup. And we'll be able to survive times like that. And that's the whole point, of course, you know what an endowment is. But, getting that in place is huge! It's a perfect example. Bob Meyerhoff, though he is a part of the Meyerhoff family, he's not the part of the family that gave to the orchestra. His first love is education and art, modern art. And he met Rheda who has been involved in the Symphony for over thirty years. She does a lot of the narrations for the children's concerts that we do. So she loves the symphony and loves kids and education.

It is through her that we got Bob to get involved. And, likewise, they both probably have friends who maybe haven't given before. And so, planning events, with Rheda, is something I'm doing right now. Let's find those friends and allies of yours that maybe never were interested in giving to the Symphony but are interested in giving to this program . . . And, hopefully it will grow that way.⁷²

In addition to seeking grants and awards from foundations, OrchKids continues to seek out smaller donations from individuals who are inspired to contribute. They offer a "Sponsor a Student" option on their "Support" page. For just over \$2,000 a year, you can sponsor one student's OrchKids education.⁷³ Alsop created "Sponsor a Student" in 2009, with the hope that every student's costs could be covered by individual donations. If that were to happen, then additional gifts would be used towards "working reserves, towards endowment. Now, of course, that's a long shot. But, we've got foundation giving in place. We've got corporate giving in place, and maintaining those, and keeping good connections with those corporations, we hope that money will recur each year."⁷⁴

⁷² Hillary Hahn, interview by author, December 17, 2009.

⁷³ OrchKids, "Support: Sponsor a Student," Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, <http://www.bsomusic.org/main.taf?p=9,5,3,5> (accessed December 14, 2011).

⁷⁴ Hillary Hahn, interview by author, Baltimore, Maryland, December 17, 2009.

Another means of providing resources for children in the U.S. El Sistema programs is what the Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles calls a “Stakeholder Network.”⁷⁵ Rather than trying to establish a completely independent music program through the Los Angeles Symphony, YOLA decided to pool resources from the community. By combining the efforts and resources of pre-existing groups, YOLA is able to feed off of the trust and momentum that has already been established, to support those groups rather than compete with them, and to reach more children. YOLA is able to skip some of the fundraising altogether by going directly to the resources themselves. This creates effective financial management and helps to build community.

OrchKids, while functioning primarily as an independent organization, has established partnerships with other organizations in the Baltimore community. These partnerships allow for the best opportunities for their students, and help multiple arts organizations to thrive rather than compete with one another.

Partnerships

The Peabody Institute is a music conservatory within The Johns Hopkins University. The partnership between Peabody and OrchKids allows for internship opportunities for college students studying music education. Additionally, the Peabody Institute students collaborate with OrchKids in performances on occasion. Peabody allows OrchKids to use their resources, such as sheet music and recordings, as well as provides tickets to the school’s events.

⁷⁵ Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, “YOLA Stakeholder Network,” Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra, <http://www.laphil.com/education/yola-stakeholder-network.cfm> (accessed December 14, 2011).

The Baltimore School for the Arts is a magnet high school for arts and academics, as well as a family arts center, in downtown Baltimore. The students at BSA have a more diverse background than a typical arts program due to the School's commitment to "make arts accessible to under-served city students" and to serve the greater Baltimore community.⁷⁶ The OrchKids go on field trips to see performances by the students at BSA and have performed side-by-side concerts with them. In a side-by-side concert, the OrchKids students get to sit next to the BSA students, learning as they perform with these older students.

Arts Every Day is dedicated to middle school arts education. They have worked closely with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, providing training and professional development to the OrchKids teaching faculty and providing teaching artists for arts-integrated projects.

The Family League of Baltimore plans and develops community resources. They provide training to OrchKids teachers, act as the liaison between public schools and the BSO and work with the BSO to evaluate student progress.

The Lyric Opera House of Baltimore collaborates by bringing opera singers to the students to expose them to vocal training techniques, as well as opens their doors to the OrchKids students for performances, tours, and other educational events.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Baltimore School for the Arts, "About BSA," <http://www.bsfa.org/about-bsa/overview> (accessed July 3, 2011).

⁷⁷ OrchKids, "About: Community Partners," Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, <http://www.bsomusic.org/main.taf?p=9,5,1,9> (accessed March 20, 2011).

Each of these partnerships provides a resource for OrchKids that eliminates a need for extra fundraising. By sharing resources in the Baltimore community, the burden of fundraising is lessened.

Funding for El Sistema

The diversity of fundraising discussed above is very different from the fundraising in El Sistema. In Venezuela, every núcleo is supported by the national government. However, núcleo directors are still always fundraising to try to find extra money for their programs. If they see a need for additional instruments, or for a nicer quality instrument for a student who is doing very well, for new teachers or for better opportunities for their top students, they have to find that money. The individual sponsors and donors are critical for this type of fundraising. The major difference, it seems, is in the lack of effort towards grant applications and funds from foundations. The Inter-American Development Bank gave two phases of large loans to FESNOJIV at the national level to help them build the Centro de Acción Social por la Musica (Center for Social Action through Music, also known as the Sede Nuevo, or the new headquarters in Caracas), and to expand the scope of how many students they serve. This is the only published large-sum loan or grant to FESNOJIV that the author has found.

Phase I of the Inter-American Development Bank loan was primarily to help build the Centro de Acción Social por la Musica. Phase II is more about the expansion of FESNOJIV. It plans to increase enrollment to 500,000 by 2015, to build seven Regional Centers to help regulate núcleos, monitor progress, and implement surveys. They hope to increase awareness of FESNOJIV, so that 90% of all people surveyed in regions with a

Regional Center and a núcleo are aware of FESNOJIV “through the mass media (TV, radio, internet) and/or community outlets (including community centers, clinics and health posts, and schools).”⁷⁸ As explained in the introduction of the proposal,

The program seeks to deconcentrate the System, by creating an intermediate regional level between the national directorate and the community-based centers. Accommodating this new level will involve adjustments to the music education, administrative, financial, and information systems. The program will also finance the investment in regional infrastructure (seven Regional Centers), and the purchase of musical instruments to meet the new demand.⁷⁹

The document provides financial history for the organization:

The System’s budget was US \$61.2 million in 2006. Government contributions are its main source of funding (91%) (primarily from the central government), while the remainder comes from private donations (5%) and external sources, i.e., the Bank loan (4%).⁸⁰

When asked about funding, El Sistema spokesman and director of the Los Chorros núcleo Rafael Elster encouraged fearlessness when creating a núcleo, despite financial concerns.

Don’t think, wow, if the government doesn’t support me, how am I going to do [this]? No. We do have a lot of support, but we have a lot of support 34 years LATER! At the beginning, uh! No, no, no. It wasn’t that easy. We have [to fundraise] for every single núcleo. Every guy in charge of every single núcleo is looking for money. Every single person. We do a concert for a flute. Now, I wanna play a concert for . . . *shoes*. I’m gonna do everything I need to keep my

⁷⁸ Inter-American Development Bank, “Venezuela. Proposal for a loan for a program to support the Centro de Acción Social por la Música, Phase II,” Annex I, page 3, Los Angeles Philharmonic: YOLA Resource Library, <http://www.laphil.com/education/yola-resource-library.cfm> (accessed January 30, 2012).

⁷⁹ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 4.

project on. When the project works, when you have a product to show, everybody's going to be, "Wow! I am going to support you."⁸¹

Governmental and Organizational Regulations

The documented goals and strategies of OrchKids are much more specific and readily available than any written goals of El Sistema. The bureaucracy in American culture requires detailed records of everything that goes on, including documented mission statements, strategies, and timetables. In Venezuela, the government is largely hands-off in their relationship with El Sistema. They provide funding, and the directors proceed as they please. This is not to say that the directors of the núcleos have no plan. There are levels, structures, procedures that they follow. But there is a strong sense of "adjust as you go" within each núcleo, which can be more difficult in American society. Trahey, reflecting on his initial impression of El Sistema, thought:

[El Sistema is] successful because of the lack of administrative bureaucracy. Their motto is just do it. NO curriculum, nothing. It's just people getting together to play music. I worry still in this country is that the whole organization will be brought down *because* of the organization.⁸²

A moment from the author's interview with Rafael Elster, the designated representative provided at the national headquarters, demonstrates the typical attitude toward bureaucracy in El Sistema:

Shoemaker—I guess I could use from you any actual statistics that you all have gathered?

Elster—You can look at the InterAmerican Development Bank.

⁸¹ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

⁸² Daniel Trahey, interview by author, July 10, 2010.

Shoemaker—Uh-huh. I looked at their website last year and couldn't find any statistics.

Elster—Well, statistics are not that easy . . . what else? [laughs]⁸³

Since that time, information from the IADB has been posted on the Los Angeles Philharmonic website.⁸⁴ Crime and school-dropout rates have declined so substantially in neighborhoods where El Sistema is active that every dollar invested in the program returns about \$1.68 in social dividends, according to The Inter-American Development Bank.⁸⁵

The “Inter-American Development Bank: Phase II Proposal” shows that as FESNOJIV is growing in size and international renown, it is making an effort to gather statistics much like OrchKids has done since the beginning. The proposal explains that in order to expand in numbers, “this program will consolidate the achievements of the prior operation and develop the institutional and evaluation aspects that the previous program did not provide.”⁸⁶

⁸³ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

⁸⁴ Los Angeles Philharmonic, “YOLA Resource Library,” <http://www.laphil.com/yola/yola-resource.cfm> (accessed January 1, 2012).

⁸⁵ Paul Keegan, “El Sistema: The Responsibility Project: exploring what it means to do the right thing,” February 10, 2011. <http://responsibility-project.libertymutual.com/reporting/el-sistema#fbid=nFOCTQ1xSsE> (accessed December 15, 2011).

⁸⁶ Inter-American Development Bank, “Venezuela. Proposal for a loan for a program to support the Centro de Acción Social por la Música, Phase II,” page 2, Los Angeles Philharmonic: YOLA Resource Library, <http://www.laphil.com/education/yola-resource-library.cfm> (accessed January 30, 2012).

The other document provided by the LA Philharmonic, “Music to My Ears: The (Many) Socio-Economic Benefits of Music Training Programs,”⁸⁷ is a research paper written by IADB research department member José Cuesta in 2008. “Filling a knowledge gap on social—rather than individual—benefits of music programs,” he explains, “this study provides an estimate of the social benefits associated with an unparalleled music training program through music in Venezuela.”⁸⁸ The paper provides a “cost-benefit approach to estimate the magnitude of the System’s social benefits.”⁸⁹ The project showed a reduction in the school dropout rate, a reduction in crime, and an improvement in class attendance and in employability.⁹⁰

Roberto Zambrano promoted the administrative process and governance in El Sistema, saying,

There is a political system of national control and supervision, interior affairs, in addition to economic supervision, distribution of resources . . . and if a núcleo is not functioning properly, this system helps it overcome difficult obstacles. All interior problems (within the local affairs) are dealt with at central (centralized, common) level and I consider this to be a very important provision.⁹¹

⁸⁷ José Cuesta, “Music to My Ears: The (Many) Socio-Economic Benefits of Music Training Programs,” Inter-American Development Bank Research Department, July 2008, Los Angeles Philharmonic: YOLA Resource Library, <http://www.laphil.com/education/yola-resource-library.cfm> (accessed January 30, 2012).

⁸⁸ Ibid, 1.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ José Cuesta, “Music to My Ears: The (Many) Socio-Economic Benefits of Music Training Programs,” Inter-American Development Bank Research Department, July 2008, p. 2-4, Los Angeles Philharmonic: YOLA Resource Library, <http://www.laphil.com/education/yola-resource-library.cfm> (accessed January 30, 2012).

⁹¹ Roberto Zambrano, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 24, 2009.

While some protocol must be in place for an organization that manages around 400,000 people, there was little sense of that while visiting. Only when in the central headquarter offices in Caracas and the large núcleo Montalbán did the author sense any structure comparable to what one might expect in the United States. Eric Booth, one of the country's most recognized leaders in arts learning, and Senior Advisor to El Sistema USA⁹² cites the “ongoing tension between freedom and structure” as one of the reasons for El Sistema's success.⁹³ The needs of the children always come before policy in El Sistema, which can create chaos, but can also allow the children to thrive. Booth explains, “Like the artist with a clear vision, who uses the freedom-structure balance to create the best work, the universal and highest goal to develop the whole child allows El Sistema educators to use their freedom and structure flexibly to fulfill their mission.”⁹⁴

While one child may benefit from the security of an extra year in the choir and in recorder class, another one may thrive by being placed with older children in the orchestra. Though most children are taught to stay in their community and give back, some children are sent to Caracas to study at a conservatory. When one rehearsal space can't work because it gets rained out, all of the students are prepared to grab their stands and chairs and haul them to wherever the next best space is. The little details do not cloud the vision of the bigger picture in El Sistema.

⁹² Eric Booth, “Home,” <http://www.everydayarts.info> (accessed January 22, 2012).

⁹³ Eric Booth, “El Sistema's Open Secrets,” (paper presented at the Composing Change: YOLA and the El Sistema Movement conference, Los Angeles, CA, May 6-8, 2010).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER V

MUSICAL EXCELLENCE *VIS-À-VIS* SOCIAL SKILLS

One of the primary questions asked during observation, as mentioned on page five, was, “What is the priority: social change or musical accomplishment?” Admittedly, any type of musical accomplishment or progress should be considered a social change as well. As Blacking explained in his book *How Musical is Man?*, “Music is a synthesis of cognitive processes which are present in culture and in the human body: the forms it takes, and the effects it has on people, are generated by the social experiences of human bodies in different cultural environments.”⁹⁵ Musical progress, such as the improvement of a technical skill, the learning of a new piece, or a successful performance, can be identified within its own category. However, music can lead to broader behavioral changes that allow for an improved future for students and their communities, therefore contributing to “social change.” With obvious holes in the separation of musical and social skills into two categories, I deem it necessary to this paper.

OrchKids leaders take seriously the responsibility of teaching skills separate from music that will open doors for the children no matter what field they choose to enter. For example, the children are taught to look others in the eye when speaking to them, to shake hands when meeting people, and to speak clearly about themselves. By taking the time to teach the children these culturally accepted behaviors, the OrchKids leaders are showing their interest in preparing the children for the future. These types of behaviors

⁹⁵ John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973), 90.

will make OrchKids participants more employable in the future, and will also enable them to represent the OrchKids program more effectively when given the opportunity. The focus on skills outside of musical training and rehearsal etiquette is a distinction between OrchKids and El Sistema.

In El Sistema, self-confidence is gained through the mastery of music-specific skills. By realizing their own ability to set a goal and accomplish it through hard work, the students learn a transferable skill that can be applied within or outside of music. The Venezuelan program focuses on the musical progress, understanding that social gains will be made through the musical training itself. OrchKids, on the other hand, has determined that social change, through multiple avenues of education, is the goal. While music education is primary, they have decided to use other resources and methods to broaden the spectrum of the children's lives as much as possible.

Though FESNOJIV works through music education primarily, skipping the types of activities present in OrchKids, its leaders remain passionate about its social cause. Rafael Elster urged that the focus should not be on the top players in the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra, but instead should be on what is happening for the masses of children around the country.

And everybody wants to do it because we proved to the world that this brings results. But the most important thing is what I'm talking about—the results are not the Bolivar Symphony... That's not the result. People start like, "wow! I want my kid to be like that!" No! This is a social program. Forget about what's going on with the music. If we have a núcleo with 2000 kids and two of them—only two of them—become great musicians, that is a successful núcleo. Amazingly successful núcleo. But if I have a núcleo with forty guys, and all of them become musicians, that is a failure.

. . . When a guy in a community wins the lottery, or any substantial prize, the first thing he does is move out. To a great neighborhood. Because now I'm rich! What am I going to do in this crappy neighborhood? I need a great a classy place to live. If you go in a neighborhood and grab a kid and make him Gustavo Dudamel, he gonna move out. But if you go in a neighborhood and you create an *orchestra*, with 100, 200, 300, 500, 1000 kids. Playing together that's going to be the orchestra of the neighborhood. You're gonna give something to the neighborhood you don't want to take one out of the neighborhood. And imagine that orchestra start getting better and getting better, and more kids are coming. The people are going to be proud of this orchestra. This is my orchestra. It's a feeling of belonging. This belongs to *me*, this is my neighborhood orchestra . . . Kids understand that working together, you bring good things to your neighborhood. And you change the neighborhoods. The thing is not [to] move out of your country, the thing is [to] make your country better.⁹⁶

It is clear from Elster's commentary that, though the pedagogy is focused solely on the music, the goals are not. And, as Blacking said, "We can no longer study music as a thing in itself when research in ethnomusicology makes it clear that musical things are not always strictly musical, and that the expression of tonal relationships in patterns of sound may be secondary to extramusical relationships which the tones represent."⁹⁷ Perhaps Jose Antonio Abreu read Blacking's book as he was envisioning El Sistema. While OrchKids approaches music and social change separately, El Sistema seems to tackle both through its music education. It even resembles the qualities that Blacking observed from the Venda in Africa. "It is an experience of becoming, in which individual consciousness is nurtured within the collective consciousness of the community and hence becomes the source of richer cultural forms."⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

⁹⁷ John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973), 25.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

CHAPTER VI

IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY

El Sistema and OrchKids are similar in that they both aim to guide the formation of successful persons in neighborhoods that do not have the resources to do so on their own. They do this by developing the individual and communal identities of their students. Without a strong concept of personal worth and belonging to a community, it is unlikely that a child will have the drive to become a contributing member of society. This chapter considers the multiple avenues for identity formation used in El Sistema and OrchKids. Some are intentional, and others may not be. The avenues for identity formation discussed here are: imagining communities, community-building, the promotion of vision for the future, nationalism, populist nationalism, broadening worldview, the musical construction of identity, race and class, uniforms, musical genre, the religion of music, globalization, and anti-culturalism.

As Jose Antonio Abreu explains, “Poverty is not just the lack of a roof or bread . . . It is also a spiritual lack—a loneliness and lack of recognition. The vicious cycle of poverty can be broken when a child poor in material possessions acquires spiritual wealth through music.”⁹⁹ A strong personal identity and belonging to community are significant aspects of the spiritual wealth of which Abreu speaks. Many scholars have examined

⁹⁹ Tricia Tunstall, *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012), XII.

identity formation through music, and it is valuable to study how their theories apply to El Sistema and OrchKids.

Nationalism

Benedict Anderson, in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, states that, “nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time.”¹⁰⁰ He introduces the concept of *imagined identity* through the nation. A nation has hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of people that will never meet, yet have *imagined* certain shared values and experiences that create a sense of unity. Anderson describes the nation as a *community*, because, “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”¹⁰¹ One example of imagined identity is the concept of the “American Dream.” There are American citizens who were born into rich families that will always be rich, citizens born into poor families that will always be poor, and those who have created better financial circumstances for themselves based on their own personal achievements. Though the life experiences of these three groups are quite different, many politicians and media sources (operated by companies, institutions, or politicians, all with their own agendas) would propose the “American Dream” as a possibility for all people. Only one of these three groups may have experienced the freedom and benefit of changing their life circumstances, but all three groups have the *imagined* value as part of their understanding of what it means to be an American.

¹⁰⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 3.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 7.

Commercials tell us that any loan is possible, that home ownership and a beautiful new car are waiting for all of us. Politicians promise job growth and lower taxes to propel small businesses. Though some Americans will never have the opportunity to finish high school or earn a good living, and some have been handed everything they could ever want with no struggle whatsoever, the American Dream is promoted to each of us as an important value of what it means to be an American.

Venezuela is known to have a large divide between its rich and its poor citizens. Though FESNOJIV tends to cater toward the disenfranchised that have not been taken care of by their government in many ways (such as lack of job opportunity, insufficient school programs, unsafe housing options and lack of police to keep neighborhoods safe) it manages to promote Venezuelan pride to its students and their communities. The government, by generously supporting the FESNOJIV program, can also claim some of the responsibility for its great success and for how it has improved the lives of so many. When students associate their happiness and success with El Sistema, they also are, at least at some level, acknowledging their government for financially backing the organization.

As FESNOJIV has gained worldwide attention, Venezuela as a country has received some of the benefit. One example of the relationship between the government and El Sistema was the inauguration of the Center for Social Action through Music. Though the building was fully functioning and being used to capacity when the author visited in the summer of 2009, there was an official opening ceremony for the building,

attended by President Hugo Chávez, on February 12, 2011.¹⁰² This date was chosen in part because it was the anniversary of the founding of FESNOJIV. As the pictures from the event display, all of the students involved wore jackets or medallions proudly displaying the colors of the Venezuelan flag: red, blue, and yellow. In addition to choirs from FESNOJIV, performances of Venezuelan folk songs were given by the Guárico Folk Orchestra, emphasizing the pride that FESNOJIV has in its Venezuelan heritage. Multiple pictures of President Chávez attending the event are included in the article, “Inaugurated the Center for Social Action through Music,” found on the FESNOJIV website.¹⁰³ Since the FESNOJIV website is operated by the federal government, it is unclear whether the promotion of Chávez’s support demonstrates FESNOJIV’s benefit by association with Chávez or the reverse: Chávez’s benefit by association with FESNOJIV.

The article mentions that, “One of the major achievements of the music education programme carried out in Venezuela for over three decades is the example it has set to the world. El Sistema has been emulated on four continents and there is a worldwide and growing interest in establishing music education programmes [*sic*] modeled after it.”¹⁰⁴ This, along with the strong visual and aural representation of Venezuelan pride, demonstrates the way that El Sistema is used to represent its country in a positive light.

¹⁰² Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar, “Inaugurated the Center for Social Action through Music,” February 16, 2011, <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/events/907-los-ninos-conquistan-su-sede-musical.html> (accessed February 4, 2012).

¹⁰³ Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar, “Inaugurated the Center for Social Action through Music,” February 16, 2011, <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/events/907-los-ninos-conquistan-su-sede-musical.html> (accessed February 4, 2012).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

The Guárico Folk Orchestra, mentioned above, was started in 2009 by FESNOJIV, “with the idea of extolling and preserving the cultural values of Venezuela.”¹⁰⁵ The ensemble consists of 39 cuatros, 14 Venezuelan harps, 13 mandolins, 15 guitars, 8 bandolas, 2 maracas and 3 double basses. One of its purposes is, “to keep a record of the Venezuelan folk works by writing them out in score, thus preventing them from falling into oblivion.”¹⁰⁶ A traditional folk ensemble in Venezuela is not typically made up of so many musicians. This orchestra of traditional instruments is instructing children on how to play them, but is not actually giving an authentic traditional music experience. Additionally, the act of preserving the music through classical notation could be questioned. The melodies and rhythms of these songs may be transcribed, but the act of reading the music is contrary to traditional practice. Part of the music’s history is its aural tradition. The very act of transcribing the music puts it into the context of historical preservation rather than that of living music thriving in its original community. This ensemble, designed to celebrate and preserve the traditional music of Venezuela, was not created until FESNOJIV was being copied worldwide for its orchestral program. The traditional music was not given value by the program when it started, but now, as an association between FESNOJIV and its country is a source of pride, it is promoting its country’s musical heritage.

¹⁰⁵ Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar, “Guárico Folk Orchestra,” <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/guarico-folk-orchestra.html> (accessed February 4, 2012).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Roberto Zambrano, long-time member of FESNOJIV and director of the Acarigua núcleo, when asked his opinion on benefits that El Sistema provides the government, stated:

One can say that Venezuela's international projection benefits the government as a counter-proposal or compensation for the economic support that the government provides. . . . In the case of youth orchestras, support comes from the state. And, since the amount of governmental support has been so great, and since the state has received that national projection, in addition to the social aspects, the state benefits greatly.¹⁰⁷

In addition to improved public opinion through press like the article above, the government receives financial benefit through the reduction of crime. Zambrano explained,

The more children there are in the program, the less the possibility will be that there will be children involved in the social problem regarding delinquency. This is also part of the benefits that the orchestra provides for the Venezuelan state government.¹⁰⁸

With the statistics from IADB showing the social benefit to Venezuela, it is easy to justify spending the money. Because of this benefit, El Sistema has been supported financially through seven changes in governmental leadership, and has become a symbol of positive change provided by the government.

¹⁰⁷ Roberto Zambrano, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 24, 2009.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Imagined Community

Anderson's concept, imagined community, can be applied beyond the confines of the nation-state. Often, poor Venezuelan children may not be given any encouragement to imagine for themselves a life with a career and the ability to choose a future. Rafael Elster talked about the way that El Sistema can give a vision of a better future to students who previously saw nothing for themselves but the lives of their parents.

It's a generational thing. Your grandfather and your grand grandfather and your grand grand grandfather have lived in there. And they have a guaranteed heritage of failure. I'm gonna be a guy who cleans streets. That's what I'm going to . . . And when they're eight years old, they already know. They have no chance in life. So what we do we open up our núcleo. We bring in good teachers. I teach in *there*. I went to States, I went to Juilliard, and I teach in one of the poorest neighborhoods. I walk in there and I give them all of the information that I got at one of the greatest schools in the world. A little eight years old kid. I say you're playing this way, don't do this, up, down . . . I give them everything.¹⁰⁹

By becoming a part of the community of FESNOJIV, the students not only feel a sense of belonging with the other members of the System, but a connection to musicians all over the world. If there are opportunities for musicians in Europe or the United States, then those opportunities exist for these children as well, because they now belong to the same community. The idea has materialized over and over. Top students from Venezuela have gone on to study and work around the world, at such institutions as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Juilliard School, and the Berlin University of the Arts, to name a few. One example of an El Sistema student becoming a

¹⁰⁹ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

part of the international musical community is the story of Díaz, a bassoonist that I met during my trip to Venezuela.

When visiting the Miranda Symphony Orchestra in Los Teques, bassoonist Ananta Díaz was performing the Weber *Concerto in F Major* with the orchestra. As a bassoonist myself, I was pleased with the coincidence of hearing a bassoon soloist at this orchestra concert. Díaz, who grew up in Los Teques, had been living in Caracas, playing with the prestigious Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra. I was immediately impressed by the 19-year-old's poise and finesse on the instrument. When I saw her a few days later in Caracas, I assumed this would be the last I heard of her, since she lived so far away from the U.S. However, since that visit, Díaz has been a finalist at the International Double Reed Society Young Artist Competition (2011), as well as the winner of the Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition (2012). She currently studies at the Zurich University of the Arts in Switzerland. Ananta Díaz is quickly becoming a recognized named in the international bassoon community. None of this would have happened without the opportunities provided by El Sistema. El Sistema provided the means for Díaz to excel on her instrument, and to build community globally. This type of identity formation is distinct from nationalism.

Vision for the Future

For those students who do not aim to leave Venezuela, they are still able to envision themselves as successful musicians. Ira Rodriguez, a professional musician and member of FESNJOIV, explains:

Look, I like the fact that there is opportunity for all types of people. There is no discrimination regarding race or social status. On the contrary, it is a societal credit that includes a wide range [of people] and at least allows children of low income, or people with low income, the opportunity to have musical experiences and a certain way of life within El Sistema because one advances in steps, one would say. El Sistema provides the tools to continue preparing you for until you reach the university level or a professional orchestra, and well, it could then become your profession.¹¹⁰

The El Sistema community and the classical music community are equally strongly constructed identities. When the OrchKids got to perform with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra onstage at the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, they belonged to the same musical community to which the professional musicians belong. They sat on stage in their uniforms, with instruments in hand, just like the BSO members. They performed music together that they had rehearsed in preparation for that moment. There was an audience in the concert hall that was there to hear them perform, and that clapped for them when they were finished. They followed a conductor, and worked together in order to give a successful performance. These are behaviors that the OrchKids learned that they now share with the greater classical music community. Through the opportunity to sit on stage and perform with the BSO musicians, they saw that their learned behaviors are shared with others. Their experience of what being a musician means was expanded on that day. And their understanding of what it means to be in the community of musicians will continue to grow as they learn from OrchKids.

A distinction between national identity and the identity attached to these musical communities is the nature of membership. One is typically born into a nation. Belonging

¹¹⁰ Ira Rodriguez, interview by author, Los Teques, Venezuela, June 25, 2009.

requires no activity or achievement, only birth in the right location. In a musical community, as expressed above, one becomes a member through shared activities, experiences, and knowledge. One also may feel more or less connected to the community based on length of time as a musician, or depth of immersion into the musician's lifestyle. However, once established as a musician, one assumes a large number of shared experiences with other musicians. Knowledge of valued composers and repertoire, a disciplined life committed to practicing, preparation, and rehearsal. Aspects of performance anxiety, the possibilities provided by taking auditions, and the ability to work together in an orchestra, even when languages are not shared, are all ways that classical musicians share values and experiences, even with others they have never met before. Membership to the El Sistema or OrchKids communities happens instantly upon joining. But the membership to the larger classical music community may take time and effort.

Nationalism Revisited

It is important to question how location and national identity influences the character of El Sistema programs. There are differences between El Sistema and OrchKids that have already been discussed in this paper. But from a broader ideological standpoint, there are likely differences in approach due to the world-views held by the programs' directors. Bruno Nettl, in his *Heartland Excursions*, speaks of music's role in societies in the past, when people were bound by location and had limited access to the outside world.

A society is, after all, a group of people with a distinct culture, usually a language as well, the kind of unit that is colloquially called an “ethnic group” or “nationality.” The guiding basic assumption in ethnomusicology is that a society has *a* music, or at least a principal music, that consists of a set of rules and principles that govern ideas about music, musical behavior, and musical sound and is comprised of a repertory of some degree of consistency and a hierarchy of central and peripheral phenomena . . . It is important to admit with Slobin that membership in individual musical cultures has become more a matter of interest and competence than of ethnic identity.¹¹¹

Today, societies contain multiple cultures and contrasting values. In this age of globalization, music of different cultures is transmitted much more easily from one locale to another. The subjects of this paper would not exist if it were not for the cultural sharing that brought classical music to the United States and to Venezuela from Europe. Nevertheless, differences between American culture and Venezuelan culture have an effect on the management and experience of El Sistema programs.

Nettl, an American ethnomusicologist, describes orchestras, choirs, and even famous string quartets as “impersonal,” reflecting “European industrialization and the development of similarly artificial persons, the corporations of business and industry.”¹¹² He says that the symphony orchestra development reflected the growth of industrialization. As factories expanded, so did the orchestra’s instrumentation, and just as there were hierarchies in the positions at the factory, there was a hierarchy of positions in the orchestra. The conductor reigns, with his “vice president” sitting in the

¹¹¹ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 87. Referencing Mark Slobin, “Micromusics of the West: A Comparative Approach” *Ethnomusicology* 36 (1982): 1-87.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 34.

concertmaster seat. Each principal player rules over his section and so-on.¹¹³ Nettl's depiction of the orchestra as a factory during the Industrial Revolution is not far off from how many classical musicians perceive their field today. A career in classical music, while perceived from the outside as a life with passion, freedom, and risk-taking in performances, is in reality often a career focused on blending in and taking orders.

How is this same ensemble, the orchestra, with these same roles, fulfilling such a different ideal in Venezuela? The most prestigious conductor is seen as a great collaborator in Venezuela. All students and guests of El Sistema are welcome to meet and speak with Gustavo Dudamel after a Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra rehearsal or concert. He is known for showing compassion and concern for all of the students in El Sistema, just like his mentor Jose Antonio Abreu. In February 2012, Dudamel brought his orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to Venezuela to perform with the Simon Bolivar Orchestra, showing his continued dedication to El Sistema. "The fact that this amazing orchestra is coming here to give to our children and to our youth and to our people their music, their energy, is a dream come true for me," he said. "How amazing is it to have one of the best orchestras here with us, not only as a guest orchestra, because at the end we have become one family."¹¹⁴ The musicians of El Sistema perform with passion and talk about music as an invigorating necessity in their life. Rehearsals are

¹¹³ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 34-35.

¹¹⁴ Daniel J. Wakin, "Mahler Is O.K., but Gustavo, He's Amazing," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/15/arts/music/gustavo-dudamel-and-los-angeles-philharmonic-hailed-in-caracas.html?emc=eta1> (accessed February 16, 2012).

based on collaboration. The way “a society transmits its culture, how a musical system transmits itself, is of enormous importance for understanding the society’s character.”¹¹⁵

Nettl describes the American orchestra as a dictatorship, a hierarchical pyramid where the conductor calls the shots.¹¹⁶ He goes so far as to question, “Why do the denizens of the Music Building love so well a kind of music that grows from principles they would probably dismiss as characteristic of an unkind society?”¹¹⁷ A Venezuelan might depict the hierarchical structure of the orchestra differently. An egalitarian approach to the orchestra is being used in El Sistema that could be depicted as an inverted pyramid, or a sphere. An inverted pyramid might imply that the whole is more important than any one individual. Or, a sphere would imply that all are equal. Perhaps El Sistema’s structure would be a sphere with a core of José Antonio Abreu and Gustavo Dudamel in the center.

Governmental structure plays a role in the different perceptions of the orchestral hierarchy. Venezuela, though technically a federal republic, promotes the ideals of socialism in which all are cared for equally by a strong governing structure. In Europe, where the core of our classical music canon was written and inspired, and monarchies reigned supreme, an all-powerful leader made the decisions for the entire society. And, in the U.S., the promise of capitalism encourages citizens to think for themselves, work for themselves, and create success for themselves. This narcissism is perhaps not reflected into our orchestras, because they have been so closely modeled after the European

¹¹⁵ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 3.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 42.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

orchestras, and our classical music traditions have remained largely unaltered in the past century. What remains to be seen is how American capitalism will affect the choices of El Sistema program leaders in the U.S. The central value of community in Venezuela's System could be difficult to implement with American children.

American music educators may not value community at the same level that El Sistema's leaders have. While "Community" is listed as the sixth value under "Ideals of El Sistema through the Eyes of OrchKids" (see page 33), rehearsals still remain quite separate between the different experience levels of the children in OrchKids. Time will tell if the orchestra will become a cohesive unit in OrchKids as the students mature. It is also unclear if differences in the amount of individual or small group teaching is more of a reflection of the additional resources available to the Baltimore program as opposed to the lack of resources available to many Venezuelan núcleos, or if it is a reflection of ideological differences. Those areas are somewhat grey. The larger amount of small group work in OrchKids implies that the leadership feels that more can be accomplished this way. While more detail can be addressed in smaller groups, less emphasis is put on the community of the whole.

Populist Nationalism

Thomas Turino gives a clear depiction of nationalism in Latin America in his article, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations."¹¹⁸ He tells the history of nationalism over the past two centuries, and

¹¹⁸ Thomas Turino, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations," *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 24, No. 2 (Autumn - Winter, 2003): 169-209.

then focuses on “Populist Nationalism,” “Cultural Nationalism,” and “Capitalism, Nationalism, and Musical Regionalism.” Turino uses specific examples of nation building in Latin America, allowing each story to give a different example of how music has been used to establish national identity. His article reiterates many of the ideas expressed in the writings of Anderson and Martin Stokes.

Latin American countries have used music and the arts to aid in the creation of nation-states. Colonization brought together a mix of ethnicities in Latin America. The clashing of cultures from European immigrants, African slaves, and indigenous people necessitated the development of unified cultural identities in order to establish national solidarity. Turino explains that there are “two basic types of musical nationalism that exist currently in many countries: (1) state-generated and elite-associated forms and (2) ‘reformist-popular’ or ‘folkloric’ styles-both historically layered in relation to elite and inclusive or populist nationalist periods in Latin America.”¹¹⁹ Early on in his discussion, Turino defines cultural nationalism as

the semiotic work of using expressive practices and forms to fashion the concrete emblems that stand for and create ‘the nation’, that distinguish one nation from another, and most importantly, that serve as the basis for socializing citizens to inculcate national sentiment.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Thomas Turino, “Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations,” *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 24, No. 2 (Autumn - Winter, 2003), 170.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 175.

Then he explains musical nationalism as a subset of cultural nationalism:

I define [musical nationalism] narrowly as any use of music for nationalist purposes. By this I mean that it is music used to create, sustain, or change an identity unit that conceives of itself as a nation in relation to having its own state, as well as for state or nationalist party purposes in relation to creating, sustaining, or transforming national sentiment.¹²¹

Both types of musical nationalism introduced above could be applied to Venezuela's FESNOJIV. The students of FESNOJIV and their communities all have an increased sense of belonging to the Venezuelan nation-state thanks to the many ways that FESNOJIV has impacted their lives. Additionally, these students have formed a new group that "conceives of itself as a nation."¹²² Involvement in El Sistema has both changed individual identities and created a group identity that is so strong, it contains shared values, and connects people across a country that have never met one another.

OrchKids has employed musical nationalism as well. Unlike FESNOJIV, at this point, there is no obvious connection to the national or local government for the children participating in OrchKids. However, music has created a new identity unit for the children, who are proud to say that they are a part the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.¹²³

In populist nationalism, the elite of society create a sense of belonging for the masses that is powerful enough to make them feel as a part of the society, and therefore

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Thomas Turino, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations," *Latin American Music Review/Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 24, No. 2 (Autumn - Winter, 2003), 175.

¹²³ Nick Skinner, phone interview by author, December 21, 2011.

the nation. In theory, if their local identity is strong, they will want to remain separate from the national identity. One example that Turino uses is from Peru, where they used public education to make rural indigenous children feel like they were a part of the society. These children eventually joined in the nationalist movement because they felt as if they belonged.

Aspects of populist nationalism can be seen in El Sistema. It is a government-funded program that reaches over 350,000 people every year. One would have to imagine that if the government is willing to spend \$120 million per year¹²⁴ on a cultural program that they would see some benefit from it. Ideally those benefits are social and aesthetic, but I propose that there are benefits to the nationalist cause as well. All of the children in El Sistema, and their families, know that they have been given the gift of music through FESNOJIV, and it will change their lives on some level. Since El Sistema is designed primarily for children in need, it takes on the populist ideal of reaching out to the “masses” and helping them to feel engaged in society. Even though núcleos are by nature oriented to a singular community, El Sistema is in part so effective because it *is* a system, and all involved know that they are a part of something that reaches across their nation. They belong to something special, and the System belongs to Venezuela.

Broadened Worldview

OrchKids, being designed without the help of the United States government, is free to operate without any pressure of nationalist sentiment. However, its administrators feel an obligation to initiate a sense of belonging to a larger community. In this case, that

¹²⁴ Tricia Tunstall, “Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music,” (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012), 36.

larger community is greater Baltimore. The children participating in OrchKids are given opportunities to enjoy cultural events and sporting events in Baltimore. Many of them, when not with OrchKids, rarely get to leave their own neighborhood. By exposing these children to the offerings of their city, they hope to give the children a sense of pride in belonging to their city, and an urgency to contribute to their larger community just as they are in their smaller community of OrchKids. Hilary Hahn spoke about how the children's exposure level to Baltimore culture has grown since the program began:

The thing that I found that's interesting: we are doing these first-stage assessments this year like they did last year, and, questions like, "Do you know what city you live in?" and most of them said like their neighborhood. About half said Baltimore, and half said their neighborhood or their street. And I mean, they are really little kids, I mean, they probably couldn't tell you their address, you know? And then we say, okay, yes you live in Baltimore, tell me some great things about Baltimore or tell me some things that you've seen in Baltimore, and it's "Chuck's Cheese," "Wal-Mart," things like that, and of course the older kids, that we've taken places, of course, there is a much larger array that they can add to that mix, like Baltimore School for the Arts, Peabody, the Aquarium, things like that. I think that just naturally the way that the program is going to grow; they are going to be exposed to a lot more.¹²⁵

From the outset of OrchKids, the leaders aimed to use their program to help its students form a positive identity about themselves. While El Sistema aims to build identity solely via music making,

OrchKids takes a more holistic approach. Music is at the core of OrchKids, says Director of Artistic Program Development Dan Trahey. But the program aims to help students reach their full potential as healthy, well-educated, well-rounded citizens and community members, in a neighborhood where unemployment and poverty are rampant. Hence the emphasis on routines such as providing

¹²⁵ Hilary Hahn, interview by author, Baltimore, Maryland, December 17, 2009.

substantial meals—like a brown bag of tuna salad on pita, carrot sticks, and fruit—for every kid every day.”¹²⁶

Additionally, OrchKids leaders are also determined to teach the students how to communicate clearly. They insist on polite manners, teach the students to look at others in the eyes when speaking with them, and teach them how to speak to others about what they do at OrchKids. “In second grade, they start leadership activities, and in third grade, the mentoring process begins,” says Trahey. “One of the most important aspects of this program is that we treat orchestra as a metaphor for society. We teach teamwork, compassion, consistency and intensity.”¹²⁷ When I asked him about how the mentorship process works at OrchKids, Trahey explained: “Mentorship is hard with these kids because they are very competitive and are at similar levels. We ask the older kids to demonstrate whenever possible, and to lead in other ways, such as being line leaders and giving the younger ones pep talks.”¹²⁸ Asking the older students to model good behavior is especially important.

These kids come from a culture of confrontation and one-upmanship. They have to be reminded that the whole section has to succeed in order for the orchestra to work. We’re actually planning a four-week summer program on emotional management, to help give the kids some skills that they are not necessarily learning at home.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Rebecca Winzenried, “Bridging the Gap,” *Symphony* (Summer 2011) 34-41. http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/symphonyonline/Summer_2011/#/38/OnePage (accessed July 25, 2011), 36-37.

¹²⁷ Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

Good behavior brings its rewards at OrchKids. The children are being given many opportunities to perform as the program gains notice. What Trahey calls the “orchestra of the city,”¹³⁰ the group has been invited to perform for such people as the governor of Maryland and First Lady Michelle Obama. He cites an upcoming trip to Philadelphia to perform with the students in Tune Up Philly, another El Sistema-based program. “Only the students with good grades, good attendance records, and those who have been participating at OrchKids, will get to take part in those events.”¹³¹ Rewarding positive behavior with positive experiences teaches a lesson to the students that will carry them far beyond their days in OrchKids. Behavioral changes are already being seen from the OrchKids students.

OrchKids participants attend school an average of 10 days a year more than their classmates...and have an improved opinion of their own prospects. At the start of OrchKids’ first year, a mere 15 percent said that they expected to complete elementary school; in a neighborhood like this, it wouldn’t be inconceivable to skip school altogether. By the end of the second year, 55 percent said they expected to go to college.¹³²

Nick Skinner, program director at Lockerman-Bundy, has seen a change in the students’ outlook that goes beyond what they have been told at OrchKids.

The students’ vision of their future is definitely being broadened due to their increased access to the community. They are arriving at their own conclusions-

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Rebecca Winzenried, “Bridging the Gap,” *Symphony* (Summer 2011) 34-41.
http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/symphonyonline/Summer_2011/#/38/OnePage (accessed July 25, 2011), 36-37.

“I’m going to this middle school, this high school, this college.” There has been a shift in their perspective on what they can do with their education. We don’t talk about it a lot. They have been going to Peabody, to the Baltimore School of the Arts, etc., and they put two and two together. A lot of them talk about going to the Arts high school. But they come up with schools that we never even have talked about.¹³³

Self-esteem does not seem to be an issue with the older OrchKids students. In addition to seeing academic futures for themselves, they are also becoming very confident musicians.

They have been performing so much—they probably gave fifteen concerts this fall. It’s amazing. They just assume that if we are going somewhere that they will be performing. If we are going on a trip to the Meyerhoff, they just grab their instruments and assume that they will be on stage. It’s pretty funny, actually. They have pretty big heads right now!¹³⁴

Several years after the interview with Hilary Hahn, after multiple fieldtrips, concerts, and educational experiences, Skinner has an interesting opinion about the students’ association with Baltimore.

I would say that they don’t really have an increased sense of pride in belonging to Baltimore. But they do have a lot more pride now. [They say,] “I’m from Lockerman-Bundy.” [Or,] “I’m a part of the Baltimore Symphony.” They have pride in belonging to the BSO, and that they go to Lockerman-Bundy.¹³⁵

So far, this association is quite different than that of the children in Venezuela. While El Sistema members tend to develop a strong sense of pride and appreciation to their

¹³³ Nick Skinner, phone interview by author, December 21, 2011.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Nick Skinner, phone interview by author, December 21, 2011.

country, the students of OrchKids have relatively little sense of national or local pride. In both cases, however, students feel a sense of loyalty to the organizations that provide them with the opportunity to study music.

Musical Construction of Identity

Martin Stokes and Thomas Turino provide specific examples of how music has been used to form identity around the world. Stokes's book, *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*,¹³⁶ uses nine different examples to show a broad spectrum of how music is used to create our sense of belonging, reinforce our identity, our ethnicity, and our nationality.

Whether looking at modern industrialized life or indigenous cultures around the world, Stokes points to music as a way of "articulating our knowledge of people, places, times and things, and ourselves in relation to them."¹³⁷ He thinks that "ethnicities are to be understood in terms of the construction, maintenance and negotiation of boundaries,"¹³⁸ and that music is one way that boundaries are established.

Chapter three of Stokes' book, "The Role of Music in the Creation of an Afghan National Identity, 1923-73" by John Baily, describes his article as functionalist theory:

the function of music in this situation is to give people a sense of identity, and so to promote the successful continuation of the social groups concerned . . . Not only does [music] act as a ready means for the identification of different ethnic or

¹³⁶ Martin Stokes, *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997).

¹³⁷ Martin Stokes, *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997), 3.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 6.

social groups, but it has potent emotional connotations and can be used to assert and negotiate identity in a particularly powerful manner.¹³⁹

El Sistema uses music for a function as well. Classical music is a tool to negotiate new identities for the children involved. Whereas in Afghanistan they formed a new genre of music to manipulate different cultures into one, in Venezuela they imported another society's music. The classical music of Western Europe is being used to change the life outcomes of millions in Venezuela. It is also through the actions of El Sistema, such as rehearsing in large groups, meeting consistently six days a week, and encouraging students to mentor those who are less advanced, that they manipulate identity and create a collective of musicians. Rafael Elster explains,

But the other thing is, the discipline. The methodology. They understand if they can do *this*, they will do this also. People who think that they are not able to do anything at all—*anything at all*. Say I want to teach you to do this. And they say, well, that wasn't that hard! Let me try also go to college. Or not college, high school! Let me finish my high school. And they say, wow I could!¹⁴⁰

The children benefit by establishing an identity as an educated person with opportunity, one who works hard and contributes to their community, and one who is mastering a skill-set, and who is capable and setting and reaching goals. There is a function to the music-making in Venezuela beyond the notes themselves.

The chapter by Zdzislaw Mach, "National Anthems: The Case of Chopin as a National Composer," shows the way that Poland used a composer to bolster their

¹³⁹ John Baily, "The Role of Music in the Creation of an Afghan National Identity, 1923-73," In *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, edited by Martin Stokes, (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997) 47-48.

¹⁴⁰ Rafael Elster, interview by author, Caracas, Venezuela, June 23, 2009.

international reputation. In this essay, Mach uses Chopin as an example of how a country can form its national identity around its artists and their output. Though Chopin's music has never been selected as the official national anthem, the Polish people and their government have proudly claimed his music and persona.

Venezuela is gaining international acclaim because of the success of El Sistema. Their top orchestras travel around the world and perform with the best conductors, there have been multiple stories on *60 Minutes* dedicated to them, and their biggest "success stories" are of their students going on to succeed internationally. Gustavo Dudamel is an international superstar of the classical music world. He became the new conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the age of 28. Edison Ruiz is a bassist who joined the Berlin Philharmonic at age 19. The success of these musicians has brought international acclaim to the Venezuelan program. As its students are successful, the government provides more money to expand the program to reach more people, and sends the orchestra on more international tours. El Sistema, and Gustavo Dudamel in particular, are probably the most well-known aspects of Venezuela, just behind Hugo Chavez and the oil industry. Just as Poland capitalized on Chopin's magnetism and international acclaim, Venezuela has gained notice from the successes of its El Sistema all-stars.

Race and Class

Introducing classical music into the primarily African-American community in Baltimore brings up issues of race and social class. While some performers, composers, and classical music supporters are from the African-American community and other minority communities in the U.S., one trip to the symphony would confirm that the

primary audience for symphony concerts is white, upper-middle class, and over 50. So, as classical music infiltrates elementary schools in West Baltimore, the effects on the community could be quite different than in a white suburban neighborhood. Nick Skinner, program director of the Lockerman-Bundy núcleo, explains,

One of the main things that we do through OrchKids is to provide access for a community. Before OrchKids, most of the parents had not ever been to the Meyerhoff. They only live a couple of miles from it, and yet they had never even thought about going to an event there until their kids were in OrchKids.¹⁴¹

The students do not know that their involvement in classical music is unusual. It is not something that is focused on in OrchKids. Similarly, Trahey establishes the importance of not telling the children that they are poor. “Kids don’t know they’re poor until someone tells them.”¹⁴² Whether this is true or not, it influences OrchKids policy to focus on the possibilities available to the children, rather than what is unusual about it. The parents, it turns out, are the ones who recognize what is both unusual and special about OrchKids. They understand that most children in their neighborhood have not been given this level of musical training in the past. They realize that most of the audiences at the Meyerhoff are white. And they see the behavioral changes in their children as they participate in OrchKids. By this fourth year, there is obvious “growth of parental support. The kids are really too young for their hearts to be in it. They have fun at OrchKids, but the parents are the ones who are really into this.”¹⁴³ There is a new parent group forming

¹⁴¹ Nick Skinner, phone interview by author, December 21, 2011.

¹⁴² Daniel Trahey, phone interview by author, October 12, 2011.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

for OrchKids. The parents came to OrchKids leaders and told them that they wanted to be involved. The Parent Union will help with pictures and video, will sell merchandise, and help with OrchKids however they can.¹⁴⁴

The backgrounds of the teachers in El Sistema programs have the potential to influence the acceptance of the programs in their communities. In Venezuela, the teachers of the programs in El Sistema are almost always from the same communities as the students. In most cases, the teachers live in the same neighborhoods, or grew up in similar neighborhoods to the ones where their students live. Their culture is shared, and while not everyone looks the same, most people are some mix of native, European, and African heritage. In the United States, at this point, many of the teachers in El Sistema-based programs come from very different experiences than the students. While the program managers in Baltimore certainly try to introduce as many African-American role models as possible to the children, most of the teachers that work with the kids on a daily basis are white. The program directors and managers are white. The music director of the Baltimore Symphony, who initiated the program, known to the children as “Ms. Marin,” is white. While the children might be too young to have any reaction to this, their parents could potentially feel this pull and feel separate from the teachers. This separation, combined with the parents’ lack of familiarity with the musical skills being taught, could potentially hinder the building of community between OrchKids and West Baltimore. However, the program directors have actively sought out African-American teachers for their program. African-American teachers and staff manage many of the nonmusical

¹⁴⁴ Nick Skinner, phone interview by author, December 21, 2011.

tasks that need to be covered—such as afterschool tutoring, meals, and school-day discipline in music classes. Additionally, the directors have hired African-American students at the Peabody Institute whenever possible to work as interns. Those students, however, while of the same race, may not share the same background. Just like most white professional musicians, most black professional classical musicians come from middle-to-upper class families. Any separateness caused by differences in background has not hindered the efforts of the program directors to actively involve the families in OrchKids and to bring OrchKids out into the greater Baltimore community.

“Clothes Make the Musician”

One method of displaying a communal identity is through uniform clothing. Classical musicians typically perform in either all black uniforms or “concert black,” which consists of tuxedos for men and full-length black formalwear for women. Bruno Nettl, in his study of the meanings at play in mid-western music schools, explains that a concert uniform “accomplishes the depersonalization of the individual, giving the orchestra a faceless quality that is exacerbated by requirements of such uniform behavior as bowing. The audience is expected to think of the orchestra as a unit, an organism with a personality that transcends that of the individual musician.”¹⁴⁵

In El Sistema, the students wear jackets or medallions with the colors of the Venezuelan flag as their uniform in the orchestra. The top orchestras perform in concert black and bring out their Venezuelan jackets for the encores. Members of El Sistema believe that the orchestra symbolizes community, and one could infer that to them, their

¹⁴⁵ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 33.

uniforms symbolize that community. They all wear the same thing because they are part of the same community. While Nettl points to facelessness as a means of lessening the value of the individual, El Sistema increases the value of the individual through commitment to the community. If the conductor wears the same tuxedo as the cellists, it symbolizes that they are of equal importance. The hierarchy of roles still exists: the conductor leads the ensemble, the principal players lead their sections, and so on. But value of each student's contribution is the same.

There is no subtlety in the wearing of Venezuelan colors as a demonstration of national pride. The orchestra members help to show that they are proud to be from Venezuela by wearing the colors of the flag on their backs. The government funds their program, and in return they show off their nation.

**From the Author's Field Notes:
Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra in Washington D.C.**

On Monday April 6, 2009, I traveled to Washington D.C. to hear the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra "B" ("B" meaning the younger of the two SBYOs, in which all members are supposedly under 25 years old) perform at the Kennedy Center. In the audience, I was surrounded by all kinds of people involved in arts education in the region, like the education director for the Baltimore Symphony, the education Director of the Peabody Institute, and the marketing director of the Baltimore Symphony. The orchestra played Ravel's *Daphnes and Chloe*, a piece by Castellanos, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. The Kennedy Center was full; the concert was nearly sold out. I noticed that some of the orchestra members definitely looked older than 25. One of the points of pride for El Sistema are the accomplishments of *youth* orchestras, all members supposedly are under 25 years of age.

Gustavo Dudamel was conducting, and the orchestra's playing seemed more cautious, more "American" than I anticipated—until the encores. It was in these encores that they had fun, just like I had seen on YouTube videos of their previous performances. The lights went off, and when they came back on, they all had their Venezuelan jackets on: bright red, yellow, and blue windbreakers. They

played their two standard encores. The first *Danzon No. 2*, and the second was “Mambo” from *West Side Story*. The orchestra danced with choreographed instrument movements, stood up during solos, stood up when they felt like it, and cheered each other on. The percussionist was throwing his sticks way up in the air. It was energized and fun and felt free. It was so unlike the *Rite of Spring* performance from a few minutes ago. Why was this? Did the change in uniforms change setting? Do the jackets symbolize the true spirit of the Venezuelans? If so, then the tuxedos and black dresses had constrained them into the confines of the classical music world they had entered. Or was it the music? Perhaps the Latin-inspired music allowed them more freedom to move and express themselves beyond their instruments. But surely, *The Rite of Spring*, a ballet that moved the audience so strongly on its first performance that it caused a riot, has the potential to move the orchestra in some way as well. Its primal rhythms and harmonies are famous for their ability to move the performer and audience alike. This stark contrast in behavior between the main concert and the encores imply that the dancing and showing off in the encores is not a natural outpouring of their Venezuelan spirit, but rather a planned and practiced event, and a part of the “costume” that the students wear that goes along with their Venezuelan windbreakers. Musicians took off their jackets and threw them into the audience at the end of the encores, as if they were stars in a basketball game.

If this aspect of the concert was the most memorable, and has become the most famous part of the performances of the orchestra, then what does that say about our value of their performances of the masterworks? If audiences around the world are drawn to the showboat antics of the SBYO encore, then perhaps what we really value is a different quality in entertainment, rather than a quality performance by a young orchestra. We have the equally strong, if not superior, orchestras in the Chicago Civic Orchestra and the New World Symphony. These groups are comprised of the best young musicians in the U.S., and receive little press compared to the SBYO. Outsiders are drawn to the story of the social action in Venezuela, but I think they are also desperate for excitement and audience interaction in a concert setting.

In OrchKids, it is a bit early for concert black. The children, who are only ages four to eleven at this point, are given t-shirts with the OrchKids insignia across the front. In the beginning, they wore simple white t-shirts with the colorful logo for casual outings, and sharp-looking black polo shirts for special occasions. Now, the children wear t-shirts of every color when they perform. White and baby blue are the official colors for

OrchKids, and the medals given to each child upon joining are attached to a white and blue ribbon, just like the red, yellow and blue ribbons attached to the “Tocar y Luchar” medals given to each child upon joining El Sistema.

Musical Genre

El Sistema and OrchKids have developed communities in which the principal musical language is classical music. In OrchKids, the students learn many genres of music. Their education is not confined to the music of Mozart and Beethoven. In fact, at this point, repertoire from the classical music canon is probably in the minority. The choices in repertoire have been made based on difficulty level, on the needs for the particular events that they are preparing for, and on what will keep the children engaged. Also, methods that can keep the different levels performing together, and give the different ensembles opportunity to shine (bucket band, orchestra, choir, etc.) are used. Nonetheless, the overarching genre of the program is classical music. The children are being trained to play instruments typically used in symphony orchestras, and as they progress they will play more and more music from the western art music canon.

In OrchKids, leaders have included many songs, skills and ensembles that incorporate qualities of hip-hop, a style of music that thrives in West Baltimore. The first ensemble that children are a part of in OrchKids is the Bucket Band. This ensemble simply involves banging on large orange plastic buckets with drumsticks. The instruction focuses on learning rhythms, listening, and playing together. A primary method of instruction is “call and response,” which was used frequently in the African heritage of most of the children in OrchKids. Additionally, it is used frequently in African-American

churches. The students also learn “chants” while drumming in bucket band. The early use of speaking rhythmically and playing rhythms relates directly with rap and hip-hop. By starting the children in this ensemble, they are likely to be more comfortable because of its familiarity.

In American society today—and most of the world—we have a polymusical modern culture. There are many types of music available to anyone, and most people would identify with more than one genre of music. Even though so many types of music are readily available, there are a multitude of unimusical institutions.¹⁴⁶ Radio stations are typically dedicated to one genre of music, as well as opera houses, churches, bands, and choirs.

Music educator Garrett Mendez at the Composing Change: YOLA and the El Sistema Movement conference (see page 96 for more information) asked whether El Sistema programs should be unimusical institutions. He wondered if the focus on classical music was essential to the success of the programs, or if other musical genres that are found in the community of the núcleo should be included as well. Many educators have wondered if the community of a rock band could provide the same learning environment as the community created in an orchestra, or if the traditional music ensemble in Venezuela with cuatros and harps will benefit the children equally. One could teach through mariachi bands in Mexico, or hip-hop groups in the Bronx, for that matter. A community’s culture certainly includes its music. Many ask why European art music is the best music for an African-American or Latino community. The same could

¹⁴⁶ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 89.

be asked for all of Venezuela, with its melting pot of native, European, and African culture.

While many who have seen El Sistema at work are still open to the use of other musical genres such as rock, hip-hop, or traditional music, they have no doubt that classical music DOES work. José Antonio Abreu believed in the power of classical music so strongly that he has in 35 years created an army of classical musicians. They love music, love their núcleos, give back to their community, and know that their love of classical music connects them to a much larger world and has expanded their horizons. Abreu promotes classical music, and specifically the orchestra and the choir, in part because they can accommodate a large number of people. There is always room to add one more chair to the stage or to fit one more person on a riser. Other genres of music tend to use smaller groups of performers. With the orchestra, a large group of people must work together. Large ensembles support the concept of community, and require that the students are responsible to their orchestra like they are to their community. El Sistema would not be the same program without its adherence to the cause of community building.

Religion of Music

From the Author's Field Notes: A Trip to a Women's Prison near Los Teques

“Flip through it, make sure all the pages are still there,” Javier said quietly.

“What? What do you mean?” I asked. “Just check-are all of your pages still in there?” he repeated. We were leaving the women's penitentiary of Los Teques, a suburb of Caracas, Venezuela. I had to leave my passport with the guards before

entering the jail. A scary prospect, but it had all been fine. I went with Javier to experience one more núcleo in FESNOJIV. This was a fairly new project, though the concept is the same as any other núcleo in an impoverished neighborhood. They are giving the gift of music to these women as a means for building up their self-confidence and skill sets.

When we arrived, we parked Javier's car, and walked up the hill in the rain towards the entrance gate. Guards were waiting there, and Javier told them who we were, and that the director of the núcleo expected us. They called her, and about five minutes later a beautiful tall woman in a skintight hot pink outfit showed up. This was the director (not conductor) of the Instituto Nacional de Orientación Femenina. We followed her in. I had nothing with me—no camera, no sweater, no notebook. Javier had insisted that it was not safe to bring in anything. We first saw her office, a small room with violins and other instruments lining the walls. She then brought us up to the room where they were getting ready for the concert. All of the women playing in the concert who were in jail wore white shirts and blue jeans. The teachers, members of Miranda Orchestra primarily, wore dark colored shirts instead. The room was filled with all kinds of people. Random onlookers like myself, FESNOJIV officials who were there for support, women from the jail, and a lot of family members and children of the women in the orchestra. It was clear that this was a special day.

The playing level at the concert wasn't advanced—the women hadn't played instruments before—but the concert was clearly special for everyone there. The women were so proud when the audience clapped for them. They started with the Venezuelan national anthem, then the choir sang a few tunes, then a string quintet played, followed by the full orchestra. The only titles that I could remember after the fact were *Ave Maria* (with choir) and *Ode to Joy*, which the whole audience knew from soccer championships so well that they started to sing along. It was very moving. Before they played it, the conductor (a violinist in Miranda orchestra named Jamie) gave a short speech about the composer (Beethoven), though he never said his name. He only spoke of the struggles that Beethoven went through in his life that are often forgotten when his music is played. His music left a legacy despite, or maybe even because of, the challenges he experienced. The conductor implied that these women also had the chance to rise above their challenge through their involvement in music. The room seemed filled with hope, which was probably a sentiment not often experienced in the prison.

Musical “acts of worship” are common in classical music, where the gods are the great composers like Mozart, Bach, and Beethoven. Celebrations of composers' birthdays, engraved names on buildings, the consideration of manuscripts as sacred texts,

are all ways of expressing our value of these composers as *living* deities.¹⁴⁷ We do not only appreciate what those composers did in their time, but what they are still doing in our classical music world today. Nettl, in his *Heartland Excursions*, states that “Viewing our musical culture as an analogue to religion can provide insights into the mind of art music society.”¹⁴⁸ It is true that our behavior in most American music schools shows that we value the contributions of deceased composers much more than any living artists. This may not be the case in Venezuela.

In the author’s experience with FESNOJIV, its participants value the great composers very much (as seen through the names of the different orchestra levels of Montalbán: Bach and Beethoven), but they value their leader José Antonio Abreu even more. The students of FESNOJIV love José Antonio Abreu. He could be likened to their savior. He brought them classical music, and he brought them hope for a better future for themselves. He loves each one of the students, even those he has never met, and the students know that. They believe in his guidance and his message, and they proudly spread the “gospel” of Abreu to anyone who asks. Part of the pride of belonging to FESNOJIV comes from being connected to him. There is nothing like this in the United States.

As FESNOJIV becomes valued across the world, there are many “disciples” who have been trained, or inspired, to spread the word. Perhaps the greatest of these is Gustavo Dudamel. One might equate him to the Apostle Paul. Dudamel, now the musical

¹⁴⁷ Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 24.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, is Abreu's greatest accomplishment. His talent and magnetism have brought him great success, and wherever he goes, he gives credit to Maestro Abreu and FESNOJIV. The identity of each student and teacher in FESNOJIV contains the sense of belonging to Gustavo Dudamel—so much so, that it might be considered a personality cult. As if he were their own brother, they are more respected because he is so respected. Even if a child is eight years old and does not have a lot of opportunity in life, he is more driven and inspired because in some way he is connected to the beliefs of Jose Antonio Abreu and Gustavo Dudamel. To fully develop this idea is beyond the scope of this paper, but Abreu's and Dudamel's celebrity and defining nature to El Sistema makes them important when considering identity-defining elements.

Globalization

Theories of globalization are equally compelling in this consideration of identity formation in El Sistema-inspired programs. Arjun Appadurai provides a postmodernist perspective on globalism in his "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," from *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Appadurai challenges Anderson's use of nationality as the primary factor in defining identity, claiming that there are multiple factors that define our lives, and that each of those interacts with the others in different ways. He discusses the ways in which modernity has affected how we interact with one another. New technology allows the world to operate through "imaginary landscapes"¹⁴⁹ at such a capacity that Appadurai stresses that we

¹⁴⁹ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 31.

have created a new global cultural process: “*the imagination as a social practice*.”¹⁵⁰ He presents a theoretical web through which different aspects of our lives interact. This web is built of various “landscapes,” which are “fluid and irregular”¹⁵¹ dimensions of global cultural flows. The five landscapes are: (a) ethnoscaples, (b) mediascaples, (c) technoscaples, (d) financescaples, and (e) ideoscaples. Appadurai’s ideas provide a contrast to the theories on nationalism proposed by Anderson. Rather than focusing one classification such as nation-state or ethnicity, or looking at how identity is affected by one factor such as governmental structure, Appadurai states that it is the interplay of these categories of identity and these landscapes that influence us that mold our current global culture.

The most basic concept of globalization states that things that were once specific to a location are now shared around the world, due to the ease of travel and information sharing in modern times. The introduction of classical music, a European art form originally, to Venezuela, is the result of globalization. Though it may seem natural in 2012 to find classical musicians around the world, it is still a result of the sharing of one people’s culture with another. Introducing Western art music to the children in Venezuela was the result of a choice. That choice could have been influenced by Abreu’s love for this type music, his belief that playing classical music changes lives, or his desire to bring in an art form typically associated with the elite to communities that he wanted to elevate in social rank. Turino would say that Abreu, a member of the elite class in Venezuela,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.

brought classical music to the poor in order to elevate them and make them feel more of a part of society. Americans might say that El Sistema's biggest accomplishment is to open up a previously elitist art form to a larger demographic. From either perspective there has been a migration of culture from one part of the world and one class to another.

Appadurai says that the acknowledgement of this art form being transmitted from one continent to another is not enough. One must consider the multiple factors at play that weave the imaginary landscape of El Sistema, and that of OrchKids. The shared musical genre could be attributed to the ethnoscape. The ethnoscape defines the mobility of people in today's society, and their shared experiences. These moving groups, such as tourists, refugees, immigrants, and guest workers are defined in part by the fact that they do not live in their homeland, and additionally by the conditions of their move. Though Abreu was not the first to bring classical music to Venezuela, the music was at some point transmitted by Europeans traveling to Venezuela or Venezuelans traveling to Europe. The immigrant population is so large in Venezuela that some might say classical music is a part of their heritage. Many Venezuelans share more heritage with the Spanish and Italians than they do with the indigenous population. Classical music was brought to the United States from Europe. It is now being cultivated in a neighborhood of Baltimore where it did not originally thrive.

Another landscape that shapes the identity of El Sistema and OrchKids members is the mediascape. Mediascapes are the electronically distributed information that creates images from which we define our lives. In their efforts to promote the accomplishments of El Sistema, the media has promoted the children who were wearing Venezuelan flag

colors and dancing on stage to Latin beats. The performance style that is most associated with El Sistema is one that is in reality seen only at the encore of most concerts. This style overtly reflects the Venezuelan heritage of the students. Because the program has gained popularity based on these promotions of Latino culture, the program has increased its promotion of Venezuelan pride, now offering folk music orchestras to preserve the nation's traditional music.

The television show *60 Minutes* has produced two different shows on Gustavo Dudamel and El Sistema, one of which also included a segment on OrchKids. The YouTube videos of OrchKids show a different set of values than those of El Sistema. They show a wide variety of musical genres introduced in OrchKids, including performances with beatboxer Shodekeh that included call-and-response African singing, choir performances of Coldplay songs, the orchestra playing with an electric fiddler, a jazz band with the students playing improvised solos, traditional songs played by the band, and woodwinds playing the Ode to Joy theme, to name a few. OrchKids' identity through the media shows an emphasis on diversity of musical genre and instrument combinations, and always includes more advanced musicians playing with the students.¹⁵²

Technoscapes are resources, whether technology, natural resources, or people. They are the “global configuration . . . of technology and the fact that technology . . . now

¹⁵² YouTube, “Shodekeh & The OrchKids 1,” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gGeZ58DvOk (accessed February 16, 2012).

moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries.”¹⁵³ In the case of El Sistema programs, technoscapes are found in the form of visiting artists. El Sistema is able to fly in artists from all over the world. It has formed a special bond with musicians from the Berlin Philharmonic. When I was in Venezuela, multiple FESNJOIV students mentioned their opportunities to play for members of this orchestra.

Additionally, the oboists that I worked with played on German style reeds as a result of influence from this orchestra. OrchKids has welcomed visitors from more innovative educational groups such as teachers from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and the Mash Potangos, a trio promoting tango music from Canada. The primary technologies of becoming, in the case of both El Sistema and OrchKids, is the technology of the group learning through the orchestra. The commitment to group learning bolsters the connection of the child with the organization, and teaches them how to be responsible to that community. Though symphony orchestras have been around for centuries, their employment to develop children’s sense of self is very specific to El Sistema.

Ideoscapes are the political ideologies of the state. As mentioned above in the discussion on nationalism, government ideology and policy has influenced the approach to El Sistema and OrchKids. Anti-state critiques influence the ideoscape as well. There is no shortage of counter-state commentary in Venezuela. As a recent *New York Times* article points out, many think that Chavez is using El Sistema to improve his image as a leader who fights for the poor. The article quotes opinion columnist for *El Universal* Saúl Godoy Gómez, saying that the orchestras were being used as “facades, as a grotesque

¹⁵³ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 34.

spectacle to cover up one of the governments of the world that most violates human rights.”¹⁵⁴ While El Sistema leaders stay planted in politically neutral commentary, other’s opinions, both pro-Chavez and anti-Chavez, influence the landscape of El Sistema.

One might also consider non-government ideologies in the ideoscapes of the programs. One ideology is that the programs are about classical music and the musical results from the children. The contrasting ideology is that the programs are about building communities and better lives for the students. These two are competing ideas that work simultaneously. If it were not for both ideologies, the programs would not be the same.

Appadurai’s point in introducing these landscapes is to say that they are all disjunct. They operate independently, or at least unpredictably. While a mediascape may affect an ideoscape in one country, it would not have the same effect in another country. Or, a mediascape that has little effect on the ideology of its own people might profoundly affect the ideology of a people across the world. Appadurai says that as of now, there is no way of predicting which landscape will act as a constraint on another, and which landscape will propel another one forward. No matter how these dimensions of global culture affect one another, they all highlight human desire for both sameness and difference. He explains that

the central feature of global culture today is the politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another and thereby proclaim their

¹⁵⁴ Daniel J. Wakin, “Music Meets Chávez Politics, and Critics Frown,” *The New York Times*, February 17, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/18/arts/music/venezuelans-criticize-hugo-chavezs-support-of-el-sistema.html?_r=1&emc=eta1 (accessed February 22, 2012).

successful hijacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of the triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular.¹⁵⁵

Appadurai reminds us that there is no one factor that forms our identities. While location used to be a primary influence on the development of our values, it is no longer the case. We are formed by the media, by the government, by our resources, by our heritage, and will continue to be formed by more and more influences as boundaries disappear by globalization. As we look at the way that OrchKids and El Sistema students develop, we must continue to look for the landscape of influences that are playing their part.

Anti-culturalism

French intellectual Jean-Francois Bayart offers a different perspective on culturalism. Bayart says in his book, *The Illusion of Cultural Identity*, that we are less defined by the culture around us than we think. We make our own choices and allow our imagined cultural values to take the blame all too often. He reinforces his argument with a quote from Max Weber, saying, “man is an animal caught in webs of meaning he has himself woven.”¹⁵⁶ Whereas others might say that our choices are guided by our culture, Bayart argues that we define our culture, or “webs of meaning,” by our choices.

Bayart proposes that the two major “solutions” for identity—first, the instinct towards uniformity and homogenization, an older solution, and second, the grasping for a cultural identity to determine one’s life—are false. We make choices for ourselves based on many factors—“culture” is just one of them. Bayart thinks that there are values that

¹⁵⁵ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 43.

¹⁵⁶ Jean-Francois Bayart, *The Illusion of Cultural Identity* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2005), 9.

we can bring to another society without being cultural imperialists, and I believe this to be true. “Whereas culturalist reasoning posits the existence of a permanent inner core peculiar to each culture that confers on the latter its veridical nature and determines the present, analysis reveals a process of cultural elaboration in the areas of ideology and sensibility that speaks to us of the present by fabricating the past.”¹⁵⁷ Not only do we define our culture in the present based on our own desires, but we also alter our memory of our history to support our cause for today’s cultural preferences.

All human groups have music in their culture to enrich our lives, even if they do not define music by the same terms. All humans are also able to adopt music from other human groups in different places. El Sistema promotes aesthetic beauty, hard work, skills like setting goals and accomplishing them and envisioning a great future, and values like giving back to the community. These are all ideals that I consider cross-cultural. While each El Sistema program might have to operate differently, or emphasize different aspects of music, this community-based music making speaks to values that are shared beyond the borderlines of any one country. Bayart’s argument would support the El Sistema movement as a display of today’s cultural values, chosen by musicians in countries around the world, despite any influences by national identity or the media.

One might question the use of music originally from Europe as a means of social improvement in Venezuela and in Baltimore. However, according to Bayart, it is normal, expected and rational. People are making a choice to weave the culture of classical music into the lives of the less fortunate in Venezuela, Baltimore, and around the world. Enough

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 83.

people place importance in this music and its ability to transform lives that it is being purposefully introduced to communities that have never listened to or performed it before. Classical music is not valuable because of its European heritage, but despite it. It has a great value to a portion of the population today, and that is why it is being disseminated to new populations, and why its composers are celebrated like idols.

These concepts of identity, nationalism, globalism, and anti-culturalism help to clarify how the priorities of El Sistema are inherited, created, distributed and used in other communities.

CHAPTER VII

BEYOND ORCHKIDS: A LOOK INTO THE EL SISTEMA MOVEMENT IN THE U.S.

As orchestras and arts organizations have been struggling to survive around the country, many have been seeking innovative ways to create new musical life in their cities.¹⁵⁸ El Sistema programs seem to be weaving an essential thread of musical joy into this movement. The idea that arts are for the elite has become antiquated. It is becoming clearer that in order for the arts to thrive in modern times, we need a shift towards the message that the arts are for everyone. El Sistema teaches just that. Audiences and musicians alike are craving energy in performance that is relevant today. Technical precision is not enough; emotional expression and art that is current are what will take classical music into the future.

Mark Churchill, the Dean Emeritus of New England Conservatory's Department of Preparatory and Continuing Education, formed El Sistema USA in order to create community and networking opportunities for El Sistema advocates in the U.S. By creating a network, El Sistema USA serves as a first step towards a true system of núcleos across the U.S. As of now, all of the núcleos in the U.S. operate independently of

¹⁵⁸ The League of American Orchestras now has the slogan, "Engaging. Sustaining. Transforming" and dedicates a large portion of its website to innovations in American symphony orchestras. "Innovation Forum," *The League of American Orchestras*, http://www.americanorchestras.org/knowledge_research_and_innovation/innovations_forum.html (accessed June 28, 2010).

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation also sponsored *The Search for Shining Eyes*, a research project addressing the change necessary for maintaining audiences for American orchestras.

one another, though most realize the benefits to communication and sharing of their challenges and successes. By establishing a network to improve communication and collaboration between núcleos, there will be more of a spirit of support, and easy access to ideas that can strengthen the programs.

Churchill was one of the first advocates of FESNOJIV in the U.S. In addition to starting El Sistema USA, he created the Youth Orchestra of the Americas in 2002 as a way of bringing together young musicians from North and South America, and in 2005 “spearheaded the signing of the ‘Friendship Agreement’ between New England Conservatory and Venezuela’s massive El Sistema youth orchestral training program—planting the seeds for NEC’s close relationship to that program.”¹⁵⁹ Because of his involvement, many students at New England Conservatory have been able to perform in Venezuelan orchestras, and Venezuelan students have also gotten to study and perform at NEC. Churchill has been so dedicated to bringing the El Sistema movement to the U.S. that he functions as the authority in starting núcleos in the U.S. He has formed an advisory committee for El Sistema USA that not only guides the choices for that organization, but who serve as consultants for emerging programs across the U.S.

El Sistema USA runs the Abreu Fellows program, a training initiative started by José Antonio Abreu when he won the TED prize.¹⁶⁰ Abreu Fellows are the movement’s

¹⁵⁹ New England Conservatory Preparatory School, “Mark Churchill,” New England Conservatory, <http://www.necmusic.edu/faculty/mark-churchill?lid=8&sid=2>, (accessed June 10, 2010).

¹⁶⁰ “TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design. It started out (in 1984) as a conference bringing together people from those three worlds. Since then its scope has become ever broader . . . The TED Prize is designed to leverage the TED community’s exceptional array of talent and resources. It is awarded annually to an exceptional individual who receives \$100,000 and, much more important, “One Wish to Change the World.” After several months of preparation, s/he unveils his/her wish at an award

future leaders. They go through a yearlong training program that prepares them to start their own núcleos around the U.S. and the world. The program trains 10 individuals per year, and 2011-2012 marks the third class of Abreu Fellows. Previous fellows now run El Sistema programs in such cities as Los Angeles, Juneau, Boston, Raleigh, Atlanta, and Philadelphia, to name a few.

In May 2010, the League of American Symphony Orchestras, El Sistema USA, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic hosted a conference entitled, “Composing Change: YOLA and the El Sistema Movement.” The conference was held to establish this new community of advocates for change in music education in our country, to provide information for those new to the movement, and to use Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, the LA Philharmonic’s núcleo, as a case study to highlight the challenges they faced and strategies that have worked for them.

The environment of the conference was that of open support, encouragement and excitement. All participants were eager to perpetuate the movement, with the intent to create lasting change so that the interest in FESNOJIV will not be fad, but will become a part of the cultural fabric of the United States.

Since 2010, several other conferences have been held to disseminate information and share ideas about El Sistema in the U.S. The Longy School of Music, the Conservatory Lab Charter School and the Abreu Fellows program at the New England Conservatory held a professional development seminar called “Enacting a Teaching

ceremony held during the TED Conference. These wishes have led to collaborative initiatives with far-reaching impact.” For more information, visit: <http://www.tedprize.org/about-tedprize/> (accessed January 1, 2012).

Practice through El Sistema,” the Baltimore Symphony hosted the “Community Engagement Through Music Education” conference for the second time in November of 2011, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s YOLA hosted its second conference, this time titled “Take A Stand Symposium,” in January and February of 2012.

The number of núcleos in the U.S. has grown rapidly in the past two years. A look at the interactive map on El Sistema USA’s website shows over fifty núcleos across the U.S. As Tricia Tunstall, author of *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music*, says, “the fast-growing international movement to replicate this model is one of the most significant social and artistic developments of the twenty-first century.”¹⁶¹ In 2011 *The Ensemble* was started. A newsletter designed by Eric Booth, Senior Advisor to El Sistema USA, and Tricia Tunstall, author and music educator, *The Ensemble* distributes information on the U.S. El Sistema movement to the public. As they explain, it is their “hope that The Ensemble can contribute to that fabric of connection...and an El Sistema in the U.S. that is not just a profusion of núcleos, but a movement.”¹⁶² With over fifty núcleos in the U.S., published books on El Sistema in the U.S., dissertations and articles being written, newsletters and conferences, it is safe to say that the El Sistema movement in the U.S. has begun.

¹⁶¹ Tricia Tunstall *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012), XVI-XVII.

¹⁶² Tricia Tunstall, *The Ensemble: A Newsletter for the U.S. El Sistema Movement*, vol.1, November 2011, 1.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This paper is about the pedagogy of becoming exemplified in two different cultural settings. I have analyzed how El Sistema and OrchKids provide not only tools for the enhancement of musical skills but also tools for the enhancement of personhood. Most of the values discussed in this paper are shared between the programs, and are therefore cross-cultural.

OrchKids and El Sistema share basic principles of musical pedagogy. Both focus extensively on aural skills and the fundamentals of music theory. While El Sistema tends to use more traditional methods such as solfege, rhythm drills and conducting practice, OrchKids introduces a broader array of activities such as improvisation, call and response, and movement to music. Both employ markers of progress, introducing more complex experiences as the child shows maturity and mastery of certain skill sets.

The process of becoming involves not only musical development but also personal development, discussed here through the lens of identity formation. National identity is developed in El Sistema, but not in OrchKids. Members of El Sistema are ambassadors for Venezuela, and see themselves as valued citizens when they promote Venezuela through their music. One way that OrchKids develops identity differently than El Sistema is in its employment of multiple genres of music and in its wider variety of activities. The emphasis on a well-rounded educational experience was a choice made by

OrchKids leaders based on their interests, opinions, and resources. This choice will affect the students' understanding of classical music and their ability to adapt to diverse musical scenarios.

Both programs hope to break the mold of students' current family patterns and give them a vision for a different future for themselves. They do so by broadening the students' worldview and teaching them that they can accomplish goals through hard work. Both El Sistema and OrchKids use the orchestra as a metaphor for community and place great importance on that community. They teach the students to be responsible and work together in their own núcleos and also show them that they are a part of an international music community. All of these values prove to be cross-cultural, and therefore transferable to any cultural setting.

Just as El Sistema has transformed the musical climate of Venezuela, the increasing number of El Sistema-based programs in the U.S. will change the classical music climate here as well. The United States, unlike Venezuela, already has significant in-school music programs, bands, orchestras, and choirs. There are also thousands of youth orchestras around the country. As núcleos grow in number and as the children involved grow older, there is going to be a need for coordination of the programs. Partnerships, as OrchKids and YOLA in Los Angeles have established, are one way of dealing with this. The coordination of different programs in the same city will allow for more learning rather than an atmosphere of competition. Leaders will have to decide whether these programs should function separately or merge together.

El Sistema programs at this point are found in the United States in communities of need where multiple opportunities are not available. Middle-class communities tend to promote a multitude of activities to their children and youth, including such activities as sports teams, church youth groups, and academic clubs. If El Sistema programs expand into middle-class communities in the U.S. as they have in Venezuela, involvement may be limited to a very few who are willing to give up their other opportunities, especially when they are provided with other means of music education.

El Sistema programs in the U.S. may also influence the make-up of classical music audiences and concert behavior, though it is too early to predict such changes. One might go so far as to say that they could change the public conception of classical music. OrchKids is a classical music institution; they are a part of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, they claim to teach through orchestra rehearsals, and they use orchestral instruments. However, they are teaching their students a wide variety of musical genres, and are performing those genres for the public, including the West Baltimore community. If every U.S. núcleo were to do this, there could be an incredible number of people who associate classical music with these different genres. Additionally, performances are given at a variety of venues including the elementary school, local arts festivals, and the symphony hall, and are given with more freedom. Performances typically involve some sort of movement, interaction, and spontaneity. The perpetuation of more núcleos like OrchKids could be the most effective agent for change in classical music, finally moving it out of the 19th century. It can change how classical music is placed in society.

As more and more El Sistema programs are developed in the U.S. and internationally, it will be up to each director to guide the pedagogy and approach as he or she sees fit. As long as these new programs share the cross-cultural values listed above, they will be perpetuating the ideals of El Sistema. The pedagogy of becoming serves as a mode of personal transformation and has the potential to transform conceptions of classical music around the world.

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APPENDIX A

ORCHKIDS LONG-RANGE PLANS AS OF JULY 2009



Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
Marin Alsop, Music Director




ORCHKids:
**Using Music as a
Vehicle for Social
Change**

Long-Range Plan
Revised July 2009

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

ORCHKids
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The Music Director's Vision



- **The BSO will:**
 - Represent the diversity of Baltimore's communities.
 - Engage with the people of Baltimore to become a robust and trusted community resource.
 - Cultivate a love of and appreciation for music in all Maryland residents.
 - Make our performances, programs, and activities accessible to all.

Marin Alsop and ORCHKid Irennsha Harris

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ORCHkids Program Mission



The ORCHkids read with BSO narrator and storyteller Rheda Becker

- Use music to **mentor**, encourage, and engage with **at-risk Baltimore City children**.
- Work with these children to create a vision for a **promising future**.
- Provide children with the tools they need to become **life-long learners** and **model citizens**.
- Be a **key partner in city programs** devoted to promoting music and the arts as well as academics, community development, community awareness, citizenship, family, and emotional and physical well-being.
- Continue to develop the BSO as a **civic resource**.

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ORCHkids Program Goals: Artistic, Academic, Social & Civic

- Expand children's **creativity** and **self-expression**.
- Enhance children's **cooperative learning** and **teamwork** skills.
- Promote children's **academic success** and **self-esteem**.
- **Engage children at an early age** in music and enrichment activities that will deter them from negative behaviors (such as drug use, gangs, etc.).
- Broaden the BSO's reach into the community through **partnerships**.
- Develop neighborhood programs that will create a sense of **community pride**.
- **Increase parental involvement** in all aspects of children's lives.
- Become a **model for similar programs in other cities**.

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Year One in Review: By the Numbers

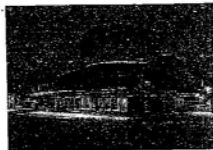
- **35 students** complete the first year of the program.
- **42 weeks** of musicianship classes, instrumental instruction, and field trips.
- **3 ORCHkids** scored in the **99th** percentile on a **musical aptitude test**.
- **4 visits** from **Marin Alsop** and **13 visits** from **BSO musicians**.
- **8 performing sessions** with peer artists such as students from the **Baltimore School for the Arts** and the **African Children's Choir**.
- **17 encounters** with **adult artists and role models**, including **tap dancer Savion Glover** and *El Sistema* administrator and **cellist Roberto Zambrano**.
- **10 fifth grade students** serve as **volunteer ORCHkids tutors** after school.
- **180 students** enrolled at Harriet Tubman Elementary attended a *Midweek Education Concert* at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall.
- **2 sessions** with a **nutritionist**, **1 meeting** with the **Baltimore City Police**, and **1 meeting** with the **Baltimore City Fire Department**.

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Year One in Review: Enrichment Activities



Enoch Pratt Free Library



Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall



American Visionary Art Museum

- **2 trips** to Enoch Pratt Free Library
- **8 trips** to the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
- **3 engagements** with the Baltimore School for the Arts
- **3 trips** to Peabody Conservatory
- **Performance** of the Nutcracker
- **Visit** to the American Visionary Art Museum
- **Participation** in the WJHU Jam Session

The ORCHkids also met:

- Conductor Damon Gupton
- Conductor Jerome Fleg
- Violinist Stefan Jackiw
- Cellist Daniel Mueller Schott
- Percussionist Evelyn Glennie
- Trumpeter Joe Bergstaller
- Tubist Steve Perry
- Das Coolsingers
- Beat Boxer Shodekah

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Year One in Review: Lessons Learned

- The *ORCHkids* respond well to challenges.
- Participating students are **personally and emotionally present** and have more **trust in their surroundings**.
- **All of the *ORCHkids* have musical ability.**
- As the **training of the ear should coincide with speech acquisition**, the *ORCHkids* program will serve **Pre-Kindergarten** students as of next year.
- The *ORCHkids* program staff members have worked with teachers and parents to develop **effective discipline strategies** for **behavior modification**.

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Year One in Review: Lessons Learned

- It will be critical to implement a **rigorous longitudinal assessment** tracking the *ORCHkids*' progress.
 - Track and document *ORCHkids*' attendance, social and emotional development, academics, and musical achievement against established academic, social, and musical targets for the program.
 - Compare *ORCHkids* performance data with a control group of non-participating Baltimore City students.
 - Annually assess the program and continually refine components to more effectively and efficiently deliver desired outcomes.
 - Create Best Practices and standards for the program that could be repeated by orchestras in other cities.
- As the program expands, we will need **dedicated administrative and fundraising staff** to complement the program staff.

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Season Highlights:


**The ORCHkids Rehearse with
the African Children's Choir**


"Prior to coming to the choir, they didn't think
having an education was possible.

Now they have hope. They have a future."

Dawna Hodgins, spokeswoman for the African Children's Choir

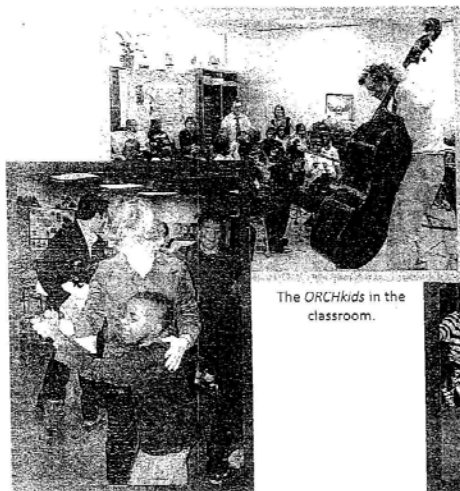


The African Children's Choir is made up of some of the neediest and most vulnerable children in their countries. Many have lost one or both parents to poverty or disease. With this Choir, young Africans travel and perform for world-wide audiences.

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**Season Highlights:
BSO Holiday Party**


The ORCHkids in the
classroom.

An ORCHkid dances with Jane Marvine.

Nearly everyone at the BSO –
musicians, staff, volunteers, supporters
– contributed in some way to the
ORCHkids holiday party.



The ORCHkids open their presents.

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Season Highlights: Musicians & Guest Artists




Roberto Zambrano performs with the ORCHkids Bucket Band



Cirque de la Symphonie, BSO Principal Pops Conductor, Jack Everly, and the ORCHkids



Damon Gupton conducts the ORCHkids


During the year, the ORCHkids rehearsed with and learned from a number of visiting artists.

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The ORCHkids Team


- **Visionary Leaders:** Music Director Marin Alsop, Board President Michael Bronfein, and President & CEO Paul Meecham
 - Pledged to engage young people – particularly young residents of Baltimore's urban neighborhoods – in musical and life enrichment activities that lead to positive change.
- **ORCHkids Program Manager:** Dan Trahey
 - A graduate of Johns Hopkins University in music education.
 - Five years of teaching experience in the Baltimore City Public School System.
 - Travelled to Venezuela to learn first-hand about *El Sistema* and meet its founder, Jose Antonio Abreu.
- **ORCHkids Coordinator:** Nick Skinner
- **Music Fundamentals Instructor and Specialist in Early Childhood Music Education:** Dr. Eric Rasmussen
- **Music Instructors:** Molly Day Peterson & Karen Seward
- **Mentors & Adult Role Models:** BSO Musicians and guest artists



Marin Alsop



Dan Trahey



Eric Rasmussen

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Key Partners

- **Baltimore School for the Arts, T.W.I.G.S. Program**
 - Numerous joint performances and rehearsal opportunities with BSA students.
 - T.W.I.G.S. students serve as peers and collaborators in the exploration of arts and music.
- **Peabody Institute**
 - Two Peabody students serve as *ORCHkids* interns.
 - Peabody students and faculty offer Master Classes for *ORCHkids* students.
- **Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS)**
 - Major endorsement by BCPSS CEO, Dr. Andrés Alonso and BCPSS Executive Director, Office of Partnerships, Communications and Community Engagement, Michael Sarbanes.
 - BCPSS donates classroom and office space, faculty, snacks, and other resources to the *ORCHkids* program.
- **The Family League of Baltimore City, Inc.**
 - Provides training to *ORCHkids* teachers.
 - Acts as the liaison between public schools and the BSO.
 - Works with the BSO to evaluate student progress.
- **Arts Every Day**
 - Facilitates civic and cultural partnerships.
 - Serves as a consultant on program and curriculum questions.
 - Provides teaching artists for arts-integrated projects.




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The Future of *ORCHkids* Years 2-5

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra




The First Five Years: At a Glance

- **By 2013, the BSO's *ORCHkids* program will:**
 - Develop curricula and implement age-appropriate activities for students in **Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade.**
 - Engage, instruct, and mentor **300 students annually** and invite many others to be a part of the extended *ORCHkids* family.
 - Employ **3 full-time administrative staff** and **8 teachers.**

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ORCHkids Staffing Structure

- **New Dedicated Administrative and Fundraising Position**
 - Full-time *ORCHkids* Administrative Director hired in Year 2 tasked with the following responsibilities:
 - Oversee all business aspects of the program including budget development, management and tracking.
 - Negotiate and issue contracts for all contractual staff.
 - Raise dedicated funds for *ORCHkids*.
 - Serve as community advocate for *ORCHkids*.
 - By end of Year 5 (or earlier), administrative and fundraising responsibilities to be divided into two full-time positions.

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ORCHkids Funding Strategy

- **Increase Annual Contributed Support for ORCHkids**
 - Fundraising plan will address program growth from current FY09 level of \$220,000 (30 students) to FY13 level of \$557,000 (300 students).
 - Priority Sources Include:
 - Sustained leadership individual funding.
 - Other gifts from individuals.
 - Local /regional foundation and corporate sources.
 - Multi-year national foundation funding beyond traditional arts funders (e.g. Soros, Gates, Ford, Duke, Casey, Weinberg).

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ORCHkids Funding Strategy

- **Build Working Reserve Fund**
 - Provides financial stability and security during critical early growth years.
 - Ensures reliable funding to cover uneven and unpredictable commitments from new donors.
- **Establish Permanent ORCHkids Restricted Fund**
 - Sustainable, dependable income stream will be needed to augment annual fund support of ORCHkids as program expenses surpass \$500,000.
 - Working reserves will serve as a catalyst to launch a restricted endowment fund campaign within the next 24 months.

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Program Costs: Years 1 - 5

	FY2009 – Year 1	FY2010 – Year 2	FY2011 – Year 3	FY2012 – Year 4	FY2013 – Year 5
Number of Students Served	30	180	220	280	300
Cost Per Student	\$7,333	\$2,213	\$2,034	\$2,015	\$1,859
Administrative Salaries & Benefits	\$110,000	\$212,800	\$218,785	\$247,440	\$240,091
Research & Professional Development	\$13,200	\$14,630	\$14,630	\$18,886	\$18,886
Facility Operations	\$4,400	\$4,655	\$4,788	\$4,921	\$5,054
Contractual Services	\$74,800	\$138,418	\$176,378	\$211,095	\$240,464
Instruments & Curriculum/ Program Supplies	\$17,600	\$29,925	\$32,984	\$40,698	\$44,280
Total Expenses	\$220,000	\$398,428	\$447,565	\$523,940	\$557,584

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ORCHkids Revenue Model

Years 1 - 5

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
ORCHKIDS BUDGET					
Number of Students Served	30	180	220	280	300
Cost Per Child	\$7,333	\$2,213	\$2,034	\$2,015	\$1,859
REVENUE SUMMARY					
Leadership Individual Gifts		\$125,000	\$150,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
National Foundation Funding			\$75,000	\$85,000	\$110,000
Current/Renewals		\$100,000	\$125,000	\$175,000	\$200,000
Prospects/New Gifts	\$114,088	\$75,000	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
Designated Support from Prior Year	\$217,701	\$111,769	\$13,341	\$15,776	\$1,836
TOTAL REVENUE	\$331,789	\$411,769	\$463,341	\$525,776	\$561,836
EXPENSE SUMMARY					
PROGRAM COSTS	\$220,000	\$398,428	\$447,565	\$523,940	\$557,584
OrchKids NET TOTAL	\$111,789	\$13,341	\$15,776	\$1,836	\$4,252
WORKING RESERVE					
Contributions to Working Reserves		\$175,000	\$200,000	\$225,000	
Working Reserves Total (5% cash investments)		\$175,000	\$383,750	\$645,120	\$677,370

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Meyerhoff-Becker Gift

\$1,000,000

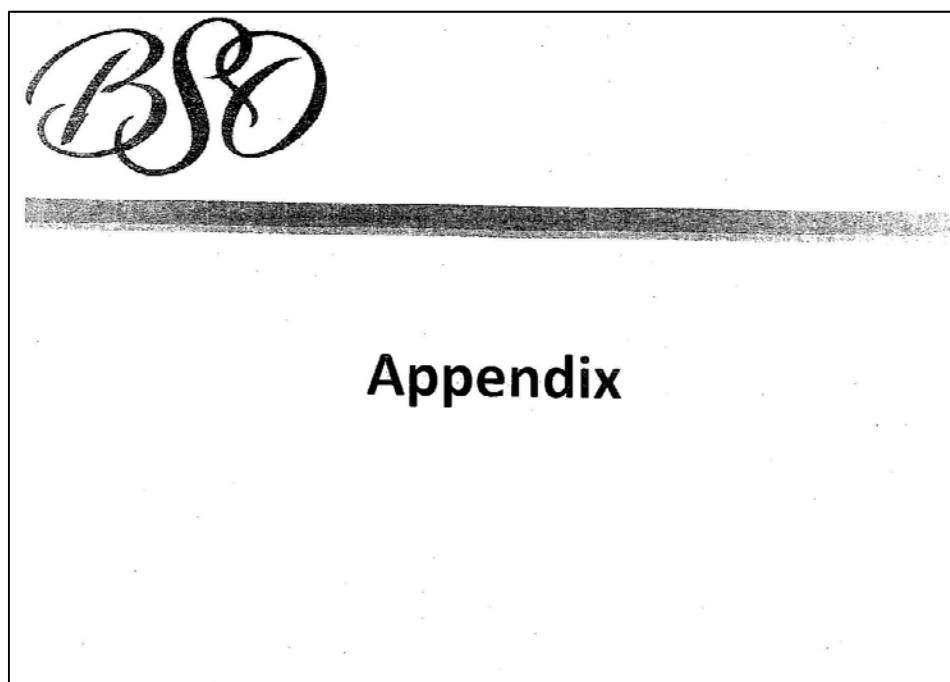
Allocation of Contributions

Contribution Schedule

2009-2010:	\$300,000
2010-2011:	\$350,000
2011-2012:	\$350,000
TOTAL	\$1,000,000

Program Year	ORCHkids Annual Operations	Working Reserves Fund
2009-2010	\$125,000	\$ 175,000
2010-2011	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000
2011-2012	\$125,000	\$ 225,000
Total	\$400,000	\$600,000

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BSO Leadership



"I believe passionately that music has the power to change lives, and the BSO should lead the movement."

BSO Music Director Marin Alsop

"In working with the *ORCHkids*, I have realized that the children of Baltimore are fundamentally great musicians."

Dan Trahey, *ORCHkids* Program Manager



"When you see the children you can't help falling in love. They are so eager to learn and to express themselves. Seeing the power of music in the *ORCHkids'* young lives is truly inspiring."

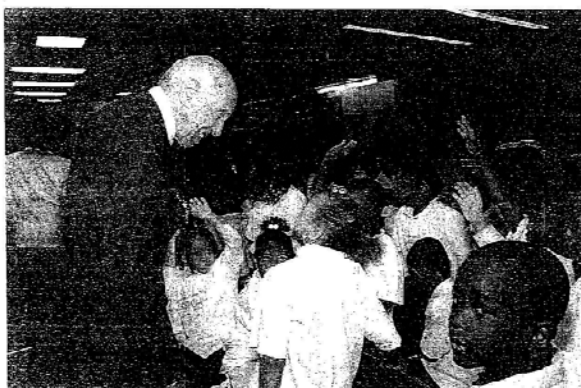
Jane Marvine, BSO Musician

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Philanthropic Partners



Robert Meyerhoff with the *ORCHkids*.

- ❖ Maestra Marin Alsop
- ❖ Robert E. Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker
- ❖ Charles T. Bauer Foundation
- ❖ Herbert Bearman Foundation
- ❖ The Family League of Baltimore City, Inc.
- ❖ The Zanvyl & Isabelle Krieger Fund
- ❖ The Salmon Foundation
- ❖ The Buck Family Foundation
- ❖ Travelers Insurance

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What People Are Saying about *ORCHkids*

- "Congratulations! The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra has made a big step forward in our movement to socially engage the children of the world through music. I hope this program continues and becomes a model for other cities in North America. The only thing I can say is More, More, More!!!!"

Roberto Zambrano, Cellist, *El Sistema*

- "ORCHkids is a tremendous opportunity... This is exactly the kind of enrichment and partnership with Baltimore's cultural institutions we want for all of our students."

Dr. Andrés Alonso, CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools

- "I have taught weeklong residencies with organizations such as El Sistema (in Venezuela) and Aspen Festivals MORE Outreach Program and felt ORCHkids was an equally well-run program."

Jerome Fleg, Conductor, Colorado Youth Symphony

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ORCHkids Sample Week

Students	Times	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Pre-K	School Day	45-minute Musicianship Class		45-minute Musicianship Class
Kindergarten	School Day	45-minute Musicianship Class		45-minute Musicianship Class
1 st Grade	School Day	45-minute Music Class		45-minute Music Class
	3:00-3:30	Snack	Snack	Snack
	3:30-4:15	Exploratory Tutoring	Bucket Band 1 Tutoring	Exploratory Tutoring
	4:15-5:00			
2 nd Grade	School Day	45-minute Music Class		45-minute Music Class
	3:00-3:30	Snack	Snack	Snack
	3:30-4:15	Bucket Band 2 Tutoring	Group Lessons Tutoring	Group Lessons
	4:15-5:00			Ensemble

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Social Outcomes

As *OrchKids* students progress through the program, the BSO looks forward to seeing these types of **social development**:

	Social Achievements
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved academic achievements • Better-than-average attendance records • Higher-than-average test scores
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-discipline • Ability to concentrate on tasks • Self-motivation • Ability to work unsupervised in small groups • Ability to show composure and maturity in social situations • Fewer behavior/discipline problems • Positive attitude towards law enforcement
Communication/ Social Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable speaking in public • Communicate about music in verbal and written form • Increased appreciation for Baltimore City and increased stake in own neighborhoods • Increased awareness of services provided for citizens
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More positive and helpful member of individual family • Better eating habits • More attention to physical and emotional well-being • More family activities
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to lead others • Ability to inspire others • Ability to create and follow through on person goals
Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to teach peers • Respect for importance of imparting knowledge and the art of teaching

Musical Outcomes

YEAR 1 – YEAR 5

As *OrchKids* students progress through the program, the BSO looks forward to seeing these types of **musical development**:

	Musical Accomplishments
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing alone and with others • Perform on recorders • Recognize orchestral instruments by sound • Listen and move to various styles of music
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand music in relation to history • Perform on an orchestral instrument • Practice alone and in small groups without supervision • Perform in small ensembles directed by a teacher • Listen and speak about music
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform in large ensembles • Teach younger children • Understand music's relationship to other disciplines • Improvise rhythms • Create simple rhythmic pieces
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a group of peers in rehearsal • Read and notate music • Compose melodies • Perform diverse styles of music • Improvise melodies
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a rich, beautiful tone on instrument • Speak about the process of learning music • Motivate others to perform music • Teach privately and in group classes • Maintain regimented practice schedule • Perform standard orchestral repertoire

APPENDIX B**ORCHKIDS EVALUATION REPORT 2010-2011**

OrchKids Evaluation Report - 2010-2011

Primary Data Collection and Report by Jennifer Arndt Robinson and Oscar Sinclair



Introduction

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's OrchKids Program is based on the belief that music and mentorship open doors and that every child should have the opportunity to experience making music. The mission of the OrchKids program is to:

- Use music as a vehicle to provide Baltimore City children with mentoring, encouragement and vision for a promising future.
- Create an after-school program devoted to music appreciation, academics, citizenship, community awareness, family and health (emotional, social and physical).
- Continue to develop the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra as an accessible community resource.

The 2010-2011 academic year marked the program's second full year at Lockerman Bundy Elementary School. The leadership of Lockerman Bundy continued its support of the program and the program model followed students in the program and served pre-K - Third grade students, and a few students who progressed to the Fourth Grade.

This academic year also brought a shift in the implementation of the evaluation protocol. The data collection and evaluation were conducted exclusively by non-OrchKids staff members consisting of staff and volunteers from UMBC. While this was a positive development in allowing for students to interact and share their opinions with adults they don't associate with the OrchKids program, it may have also influenced them to share their opinions more openly as reflected in numbers slightly lower than last year. However, this impact is difficult to assess.

The purpose of this evaluation is to better understand the effects of the OrchKids Program on children's musical, academic, behavioral and social-emotional development. Data-collection across the 2010/11 academic year was organized around five general areas of inquiry: 1) musical skills and knowledge, 2) student attitudes, self-perceptions and predictions, 3) academic achievement and school attendance, 4) social-emotional and behavioral development, and 5) adult surveys or teachers and parents.

For this year's survey we were able to separate data in most areas for students in three categories to better help follow the progress students make as they stay in the program. Students participating in the program for the first year were considered "new" OrchKids. Students who had previously participated in the after-school portion of the program were considered "continuing" OrchKids, and students who were dismissed from the program during the year for behavioral issues were considered "dismissed". Students in this category have different experiences of the program and bring different challenges. Where possible we will reference the outcomes of previous years' evaluations to help bring context to the results.

More information on the OrchKids program model can be found at www.bsomusic.org.



Child Survey Outcomes

The OrchKids Child Survey is a developmentally-appropriate interview protocol that is individually administered in both the early fall and late spring. The survey includes some open-ended questions, as well as some questions to which children can respond by pointing to various smiley/frowning faces representing degrees of agreement/disagreement with given statements (e.g. "I am a good student"). It has 5 sections: 1) School, 2) Music Knowledge and Attitudes, 3) Self Efficacy, 4) Knowledge and Attitudes About Baltimore, and 5) Attitudes about the OrchKids Program. For the 2010 and 2011 school year the survey was administered to 92 students in the fall and 62 students in the spring.

OrchKids' Feelings and Attitudes about Music

"Music is an expression of what you feel inside, of your past and present and what might be your future."

OrchKids love playing instruments and spoke glowingly about this activity. In the fall and spring, approximately 98% of all OrchKids said that they have positive feelings when they play instruments, which is consistent with the previous year's survey when 95% of students in the fall and spring reported positive feelings about playing instruments. Words that OrchKids used to describe how they feel when they play instruments include: amazing, very happy, good, proud, excited, excellent, and wonderful.

"Some music's kinda relaxing; some music can make you think about the same thing you went through in the past."

OrchKids also continued the previous year's trend of reporting a wide range of emotions and imagery that they connect to listening to music. In both the fall and spring of 2010 and 2011, many students said that they feel happy when listening to happy music and sad when they listen to sad music. Several students said that listening to music makes them want to move and dance. Several OrchKids noted that if they are sad they can listen to happy music to try to influence their mood.

OrchKids have extremely positive thoughts about music. When asked the general question "What do you think about music?" students said that music is exciting, happy, fun, great, excellent, amazing, awesome, etc.



The Child Survey shows that OrchKids have overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward a variety of musical activities (see Table 1). Children's positive attitudes towards playing music, singing and listening to music were consistently strong in the fall and spring. For students in the first year of the OrchKids program, their feelings that they liked to play music increased across the year from 91% in the fall to 100% in the spring. For returning OrchKids their agreement with the statement that they like to play music decreased slightly from 96% in the fall to 86% in the spring. New OrchKids reported an increase across in their positive feelings about singing, from 70% agreeing that they like to sing in the fall to 77% in the spring. Returning OrchKids maintained a consistent feeling about singing from the spring of 2010 to the spring of 2011, with 85% agreeing that they like to sing. Listening to music was the most consistently popular activity with new OrchKids, who may have responded to the novelty of the amount of music presented by the program in their first year more than returning OrchKids. Students dismissed from the program for behavioral reasons did not look different in this area than their peers who continued in the

program, and it can be concluded that their interest in music was not a problem that contributed to their behavioral issues. Clearly, the OrchKids program is immensely successful in helping children to establish a love of musical activities in their diverse forms, even when they are asked to do challenging things and give up other types of activities.

Table 1. Child Survey Music Data

First Year Orchkids

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010 (n=23)				SPRING 2011 (n=18)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do you like to play music?	20 (87%)	1 (4%)	0	2 (9%)	18 (100%)	0	0	0
Do you like to sing?	13 (57%)	3 (13%)	1 (4%)	6 (26%)	8 (44%)	6 (33%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)
Do you like to listen to music	16 (70%)	6 (26%)	0	1 (4%)	16 (89%)	2 (11%)	0	0

Continuing OrchKids

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010 (n=28)				SPRING 2011 (n=21)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do you like to play music?	27 (96%)	0	1 (4%)	0	17 (81%)	1 (5%)	0	3 (14%)
Do you like to sing?	19 (58%)	6 (21%)	1 (4%)	2 (7%)	11 (52%)	7 (33%)	0	3 (14%)
Do you like to listen to music	22 (79%)	3 (11%)	0	3 (11%)	16 (76%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	

Self-Efficacy

OrchKids feel capable, optimistic and empowered about their future success. They demonstrate good self-esteem and sense of capability, with the vast majority reporting that they are "good at lots of things." OrchKids express confidence in their ability to accomplish something if they try.

These feelings are both specific to music ("I can learn to do new things in music") and general ("I can learn to do new things"). OrchKids make strong positive predictions about their future. OrchKids are confident (98% agree) that they can learn to play a musical instrument if they try. For students in the program for the first year, the number of students agreeing with this statement increased from 91% in the fall to 100% of students in the spring. For students in their second year or more in the program, these numbers were consistent with their numbers from the previous spring, with the exception of the questions "I can learn to do new things in music," which decreased 7% to 90% from the previous year's spring responses. This may be attributed to the fact that as students continue in the program the expectations of their musical skills continue to increase and they are increasingly exposed to more challenges in order to help them grow. Future evaluations will attempt to address this decrease in more detail. Finally, 93% of all OrchKids believe that they will become great musicians in the future.

Table 2: General and Musical Self-Efficacy

First Year OrchKids

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010 (n=23)				SPRING 2011 (n=18)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am good at lots of things.	16 (70%)	6 (26%)	0	1 (4%)	8 (44%)	8 (44%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)
I can learn to do new things.	18 (78%)	5 (22%)	0	0	16 (89%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	0
I can learn to play an instrument if I try.	21 (91%)	0	2 (9%)	0	18 (100%)	0	0	0
I can learn to do new things in music.	20 (87%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	16 (89%)	2 (11%)	0	0
Some day I will be a great musician.	14 (61%)	7 (30%)	0	2 (9%)	14 (78%)	4 (22%)	0	0

Continuing OrchKids

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010 (n=28)				SPRING 2011 (n=21)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am good at lots of things.	21 (75%)	4 (14%)	1 (4%)	2 (7%)	10 (48%)	8 (38%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)
I can learn to do new things.	25 (89%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	0	18 (86%)	3 (14%)	0	0
I can learn to play an instrument if I try.	24 (86%)	3 (11%)	0	1 (4%)	19 (90%)	2 (10%)	0	0
I can learn to do new things in music.	25 (89%)	3 (11%)	0	0	15 (71%)	4 (19%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
Some day I will be a great musician.	24 (86%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	17 (85%)	1 (5%)	0	2 (10%)

Musical Skills and Knowledge

In order to assess students' attitudes towards music and their participation in the OrchKids program the program's child survey includes specific questions in this area. In addition the Primary Measure of Music Audiation, which was used by the program last year, will be administered every 2-3 years to track the development of musical aptitude over the course of the program.

Musical Knowledge

Instruments

OrchKids are exposed to a wide variety of musical instruments, with a particular focus on the 6-7

instruments they would be able to play in the program. As part of the evaluation, the program looks to measure whether participants' knowledge of individual instrument names increases during their time in the program. The evaluation shows that in general, OrchKids demonstrated strong knowledge of diverse musical instruments, naming an average of 12 instruments in the spring without any visual-aides or prompts. Students who had participated in the program for more than one year named more than 13 instruments in the spring. Fourth grade students named more than 14 instruments on average in the spring, which was an improvement from the fall when they named just under 12 instruments on average. This an increase from the previous year when the average number of instruments named for all OrchKids was 10. In this area we have broken down the data by grade because we know that in general students are introduced to the names of instruments across the school day and in their music classes beyond specific OrchKids program instruction. Therefore, as the entire school community gains this exposure we would expect to see fewer differences between OrchKids and students who do not participate in the program.

Table 3. Average Number of Instruments Named

Group	Average Number of Instruments Named	
	Fall	Spring
All OrchKids Combined	10	12
Kindergarten	6	9
First Grade	7	9
Second Grade	7	13
Third Grade	12	13
Fourth Grade +	12	14

The OrchKids program provides units of study on the violin, trumpet and recorder as representatives of the string, brass, woodwind and percussion families for beginning students in the first and second grades. Many students mentioned the violin, trumpet, clarinet and drum/buckets as instruments they know how to play, and this emphasis is reflected in children's feelings of competence toward these particular instruments although students named a variety of string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments they can play. More than 90% of OrchKids surveyed said they feel confident about their ability to play specific instruments and to learn to play new ones.

Musical Genres

Part of the OrchKids experience includes exposing students to a wide variety of musical genres, and helping students to recognize and name examples of music in each and to eventually distinguish between genres of music and the names of musicians. When asked what kinds of music they like to listen to or are aware of, OrchKids most commonly named genres including hip hop, rap, rhythm and blues, rock, jazz, pop, country, classical and gospel. The average participating student named 3 to 4 genres. The greatest growth was seen in the mentioning of jazz as a genre. In the fall, 21% students mentioned it by name while in the spring that percentage increased to 36%. A brief review of musical genres named suggested that there was very little difference between new and continuing OrchKids. Students, especially the younger ones, appeared to have difficulty separating genres from musicians. When asked "what are some of your favorite kinds of music?", the majority of younger students

responded with individual musicians rather than genres. This section of the survey is being reworked for next year, to better capture students actual knowledge of genres.

Musicians

OrchKids' knowledge of specific musicians increased across the year, particularly famous jazz musicians. As part of the student survey OrchKids were asked to name their favorite musicians as well as other musicians they were aware of, regardless of their feelings towards the musician. In the fall, 12% of OrchKids were unable to name any musicians and that number dropped to just 4% in the spring. This continues a trend seen in the previous year's evaluation when in the fall 20% of OrchKids could not name any musicians, while in the spring that number fell to 14%. In the fall, no jazz musicians were mentioned, but in the spring 12% of OrchKids mentioned famous jazz musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Dizzy Gillespie as their favorite musicians. Students also frequently named OrchKids music teachers and other staff as their favorite musicians. Other favorite musicians that a few children mentioned include: other OrchKids students, family members, and classical composers including Bach, Beethoven and Mozart. In the spring, two OrchKids named themselves as their favorite musician.



Youth Enjoyment/Appreciation of the OrchKids Program

Student attitudes towards participating in the program stayed relatively positive over the year, but there was a slight decline in the feelings from fall to spring. OrchKids have overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards participating in the OrchKids program (see Table 4). In the fall, 97% of students agreed that they like coming to the OrchKids program, and this decreased slightly to 85% in the spring. More than 90% of students report that they like the grownups at the OrchKids program. Reflecting back on the year, 93% of OrchKids agree that they learned a lot, 85% hope they can return to the program next year, 96% liked the field trips, and 94% liked the musical visitors.

Students report feeling "good", "excited", "happy", "wonderful" and "awesome" about OrchKids.

Table 4. Students' attitudes about the OrchKids program

"I like coming to the OrchKids Program" – Fall

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 st Years (N=28)	23 (82%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
Returning OrchKids (N=36)	33 (92%)	3 (8%)	0	0
Dismissed from Program (N=14)	13 (93%)	0	1 (7%)	0

"I like coming to the OrchKids Program" – Spring

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 st Years (N=12)	7 (58%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)	2 (17%)
Returning OrchKids (N=20)	14 (70%)	5 (25%)	0	1 (5%)
Dismissed from Program (N=1)	0	0	0	1 (100%)

"I like the grown-ups at the OrchKids Program" – Fall

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 st Years (N=28)	23 (82%)	4 (14%)	0	1 (3%)
Returning OrchKids (N=36)	27 (75%)	8 (22%)	0	1 (3%)
Dismissed from Program (N=14)	13 (93%)	1 (7%)	0	0

"I like the grown-ups at the OrchKids Program" – Spring

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 st Years (N=12)	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)
Returning OrchKids (N=20)	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	0	1 (5%)
Dismissed from Program (N=1)	0	0	0	1 (100%)

When asked what they like best about the OrchKids program, most students (64% in fall; 60% in spring) spontaneously mentioned playing instruments without any prompts. This was by far the most popular response. Additionally, some students mentioned specific OrchKids teachers and staff as the best part of OrchKids, and others mentioned the trips, snacks, playing in an ensemble, and singing in choir.

"The best was playing instruments, doing homework, helping others and listening to the orchestra."

When asked what they like least about OrchKids, many students (43% in fall, 30% in spring) said "nothing" or "I like everything about OrchKids." Several students wish OrchKids could be every day. This provides further evidence that students have overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward the program.

Student Self-Reports of Learning

"When I needed help with my homework, they gave me help and time to do it instead of saying do it at home."

OrchKids report learning a lot in the program this year. When asked about what they learned in the OrchKids program, most students first mentioned music in general or a specific musical skill. The majority mentioned something related to playing their instrument. Many students mentioned general musical skills such as reading notes or specific scales. Several mentioned singing as something they learned in the program.

Some students pointed to important social skills that they learned in OrchKids, with several mentioning respect for others as something they learned.



Adult Surveys

Parent Survey

The Parent Survey revealed that the vast majority of the 40 parents responding to the survey (97%) really like the OrchKids program and have no complaints. They cite many good reasons why they send their children to OrchKids. The most popular reasons include wanting their children to learn about

music and how to play instruments, their children's liking for the program, and their children feeling safe at the program. It is interesting to note that this year's evaluation found that more parents valued the musical parts of the program more highly than the previous year's evaluation, when more parents valued the non-musical aspects of the program most highly. Parents find that the OrchKids program helps their children in many different ways:

- More than 97% of parents believe strongly that their children get musical benefits from the program, including developing skills and talents and learning to play an instrument.
- 88% of parents feel that the OrchKids program has a positive impact on their children's success at school and increases their child's positive feelings about their school.
- 93% of parents also report that the OrchKids program is very helpful to them because it allows them to work without worrying about their child after school and knowing their child is safe.
- Nearly 90% of parents also report that OrchKids has expanded their own awareness of the cultural opportunities available in Baltimore.

School Staff Surveys

Eight members of the Lockerman Bundy Elementary School staff completed a survey to gather input on their feelings about the OrchKids program and its impact on students and the overall school environment. Most encouragingly, 100% of LBES staff surveyed agree that OrchKids contributes positively to their school. More than 80% of the staff surveyed felt that the overall climate at the school has improved since OrchKids began operating.

OrchKids Program Staff Surveys

Twelve members of the OrchKids Program Staff also completed a survey. One hundred percent of staff surveyed agreed that most students enrolled in the OrchKids program improved their musical skills during the 2010/11 academic year. Many teachers also cited increased self-discipline and respect for others as one of the most important non-musical outcomes of the program.

- All staff surveyed also reported increases in students' musical knowledge, knowledge of musical instruments, and appreciation of music.
- All OrchKids staff reported improvements in the way students view themselves, specifically in the areas of self-confidence, self-worth, and self-competence.
- The majority of staff members felt that the program is implemented well and cited the structure and schedule as key to operations working well. They also cited the efforts of the program's core staff to support discipline as crucial to their ability to teach.

This year's survey affirmed that OrchKids staff members continue to highly value the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of young people and enjoy being involved in the West Baltimore Community. OrchKids leadership will consider the input of program staff as they make adjustments to the program model.

Academic Outcomes

Attendance

OrchKids continued to demonstrate impressive attendance numbers. For the students who had attendance data reported for the entire year, 43% had 3 or fewer days of absence reported by the school, and an additional 14% missed between 3 and 5 days of school for the year. Only 14% were absent more than 15 days for the year. This compares very favorably to Baltimore City as a whole. Only 28% of BCPSS elementary students miss 5 or fewer days of class a year, and in 2011, 16% missed over 20 days.

Furthermore, as part of the Parent Survey, 78% of parents credit the OrchKids program with improving their child's school attendance.

Table 5: Days Absent

Year	<5	5-10	11-14	15+
New OrchKids (n=14)	3	6	1	4
Continuing OrchKids (n=35)	15	10	4	4
OrchKids Total (n=47)	18	16	5	8

Relationships with School and Peers



The Child Survey data reveal that OrchKids have positive attitudes toward school (see Table 5). The majority of OrchKids strongly like going to school. Most OrchKids see themselves as good students. This positive academic self-image is an important indicator of future academic success. The majority of OrchKids do not wish they didn't have to go to school and do not hate school. OrchKids strongly agree that "School is fun." Overall, student attitudes toward school stayed pretty consistent from the fall to the spring, although there are some trends in a positive direction.

OrchKids report healthy social functioning at school. About 75% of OrchKids surveyed report that they get along with a lot of the kids at school and do not get into a lot of fights with other kids at school. The vast majority of OrchKids report that they have friends at school. A large majority

report that they like the grown-ups at the school, though these numbers decreased somewhat across the year. Most OrchKids agree that there are grown-ups at school whom they can talk to when they feel bad, and these feelings increased somewhat across the year.

Table 6: OrchKids' Attitudes Towards School

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010				SPRING 2011			
	YES!	yes	no	NO!	YES!	yes	no	NO!
I like going to school.	73%	15%	5%	7%	74%	19%	2%	6%
I am a good student.	79%	13%	4%	3%	69%	28%	2%	4%
I wish I didn't have to go to school.	7%	9%	18%	66%	11%	6%	7%	78%

Statement	Students' Level of Agreement							
	FALL 2010				SPRING 2011			
I get along with a lot of the kids at this school.	65%	21%	5%	9%	51%	18%	13%	18%
I have friends at school.	81%	12%	2%	4%	76%	16%	0%	7%
I get into a lot of fights with other kids at school.	7%	8%	11%	75%	9%	13%	11%	67%
I like the grown-ups at this school.	79%	15%	2%	3%	71%	16%	2%	11%
There are grown-ups at school I can talk to if I am feeling bad.	76%	15%	2%	7%	71%	18%	4%	7%

Grades

As part of the standard assessment required by Lockerman Bundy, teachers are asked to provide ratings of student performance in their reading, math, and science classes. The rating system ranges from a low of Unsatisfactory to a high of Excellent. Classroom reading, math, and science grades for OrchKids improved from the first quarter to the fourth quarter. In each of these subjects, the number of students receiving either "Excellent" or "Good" grades increased over the course of the year. The largest increase was seen in the math grades for students who had been in the program for more than one year. Over the course of the academic year, 13 of these students improved their score from Satisfactory or lower to good, representing 68% of the overall students in this categories. While all three subjects did show considerable improvement over the semester, none achieved statistical significance.

Table 7: OrchKids' Grades in Reading, Math, and Science

From grades 1-4, we saw the following changes in classroom grades for students participating in the program.

Reading Grades

1st Year in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Reading Grade (N=19)	6 (32%)	9 (47%)	3 (16%)	0	1 (5%)
4 th Quarter Reading Grade (N=19)	10 (53%)	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	3 (16%)	0

2 or More Years in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Reading Grade (N=40)	5 (13%)	9 (23%)	14 (35%)	4 (10%)	8 (20%)
4 th Quarter Reading Grade (N=39)	8 (21%)	9 (23%)	13 (33%)	5 (13%)	4 (10%)

Math Grades

1st Year in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Math Grade (N=19)	8 (42%)	10 (53%)	1 (5%)	0	0
4 th Quarter Math Grade (N=19)	9 (47%)	5 (26%)	5 (26%)	0	0

2 or more years in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Math Grade (N=40)	6 (15%)	10 (25%)	10 (25%)	10 (25%)	4 (10%)
4 th Quarter Math Grade (N=39)	5 (13%)	19 (49%)	7 (18%)	6 (15%)	2 (5%)

Science Grades

1st Year in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Science Grade (N=19)	3 (16%)	4 (21%)	12 (63%)	0	0
4 th Quarter Science Grade (N=19)	3 (16%)	9 (47%)	6 (32%)	1 (5%)	0

2 or More Years in the OrchKids Program

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1 st Quarter Science Grade (N=40)	6 (15%)	17 (43%)	15 (38%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)
4 th Quarter Science Grade (N=39)	8 (21%)	19 (49%)	3 (8%)	8 (21%)	1 (3%)

Maryland School Assessment

Beginning in the 3rd grade, Maryland schools must administer the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) to students in elementary or middle school. This measure of school and student performance is commonly used to assess program impact on student achievement. The Maryland State Board of Education determines the MSA required cutoff for Proficient and Advanced scores. Of the 22 Third Graders enrolled in OrchKids, thirteen performed in the Proficient range for Reading, while nine performed in the Basic range. For Math, four students performed in the advanced range, thirteen students earned scores in the Proficient range, and five students scored in the basic range.

For fourth grade OrchKids, two students improved their MSA scores in Math enough compared to the previous year to enter the Advanced category. Seven students scored well enough in both math and reading to earn Proficient scores, and just two students were considered Basic in Reading.

Table 8: Maryland School Assessment (MSA) Results

READING MSA

New OrchKids

	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3 rd Grade	0	1	0
4 th Grade	0	2	0
5 th Grade	0	1	1
Total	0	4	1

Continuing OrchKids

	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3 rd Grade	8	7	0
4 th Grade	2	3	0
5 th Grade	0	0	0
Total	10	10	0

MATH MSA

New OrchKids

	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3 rd Grade	0	1	0
4 th Grade	0	0	2
5 th Grade	0	2	0
Total	0	3	2

Continuing OrchKids

	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3 rd Grade	4	10	1
4 th Grade	0	4	1
5 th Grade	0	0	0
Total	4	10	1

Description of Measures:

Child Survey: The best way to tap into children's self-beliefs and attitudes is by asking them directly. The Child Survey is a developmentally-appropriate individually administered interview protocol, and including some open-ended questions, as well as some questions to which children can respond by pointing to various smiley/frowning faces representing degrees of agreement/disagreement with given statements (e.g. "I am a good student"). The Child Survey has 5 sections: 1) School, 2) Music Knowledge and Attitudes, 3) Self Efficacy, 4) Knowledge and Attitudes About Baltimore, and 5) Attitudes about the OrchKids Program. The School section gets at liking toward school, relationships at school and predictions for future school achievement. The Music section targets students' liking for and knowledge of various musical instruments, musical activities, musicians and genres. The Self-Efficacy section gets at children's self-confidence and belief that they can achieve. The Baltimore section targets students' knowledge about and liking for their city. Finally, the OrchKids section elicits students' attitudes toward various components of the OrchKids Program.

Maryland School Assessment (MSA): All students in grades 3 through 8 in the state of Maryland participate in the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). The MSA is a standardized test of Reading and Math proficiency. The Maryland State Board of Education determines the MSA cut scores for Basic, Proficient and Advanced (mdk12.org).

Parent Survey: The Parent Survey asks parents about their reasons for sending their child to the OrchKids Program, how they feel about the program, how the program helps their child, and how the program helps them as parents. This survey invites parents to select their responses from among several options.

Lockerman Bundy Elementary School Staff Survey: School staff including teachers, principal, custodians, cafeteria workers, etc. were invited to complete this survey. The survey included a mix of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. This survey asked staff to provide feedback on the effects of the OrchKids program on students and the school climate.

OrchKids Program Staff Survey: This survey included a mix of Likert-scale items where staff rated how strongly they agree or disagree with a number of statements, as well as open-ended questions. Staff responded to a variety of questions about the structure of the program, resources needed, performances, etc. Staff were asked to share their thoughts about the effects of the program on students.

APPENDIX C

ORCHKIDS WEEKLY SCHEDULE 2011-2012

OrchKids Monday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Beethoven Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academic
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Bucket Band
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Tchaikovsky Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academic
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Bucket Band/Individual practice
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Mahler Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academic
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Bucket Band/Individual practice
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Staff:

Bucket Band Instructor
Bucket Band Assistant Instructor
Program Assistant
Program Coordinator

OrchKids Tuesday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Ms. Marin Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:35pm	Academics
4:35-4:55pm	Supper in class room
4:55-5:00pm	Transition
5:00-5:35pm	Choir Group A
	Exploratory Group B
5:35pm	Transition
5:35-6:10pm	Choir Group B
	Exploratory Group A
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Beethoven Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Tchaikovsky Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Mahler Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

OrchKids Tuesday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Staffing:

Choir Director
ExploratroyInstructor
Exploratroy Assistant Instructor
Brass Group Lesson Instructor
Clarinet Group Lesson Instructor
Flute Group Lessson Instructor
Cello Group Lesson Instructor
Violin Group Lesson Instructor
Bass Group Lesson Instructor
Brass TA
Woodwind TA
Strings TA
Program Assistant
Program Coordinator

OrchKids Wednesday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Ms. Marin Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:35pm	Academics
4:35-4:55pm	Supper in class room
4:55-5:00pm	Transition
5:00-5:35pm	Choir Group A
	Exploratory Group B
5:35pm	Transition
5:35-6:10pm	Choir Group B
	Exploratory Group A
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Beethoven Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Tchaikovsky Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
Ensemble	Tch. WW/brass
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
Ensemble	Tch. Strings
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Mahler Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

OrchKids Wednesday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Staffing:

Choir Director
Exploratory Instructor
Exploratory Assistant Instructor
Brass Group Lesson Instructor
Clarinet Group Lesson Instructor
Flute Group Lesson Instructor
Cello Group Lesson Instructor
Violin Group Lesson Instructor
Bass Group Lesson Instructor
Brass TA
Woodwind TA
Strings TA
Ensemble Director
Assistant Ensemble Director
Program Assistant
Program Coordinator

OrchKids Thursday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Ms. Marin Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:35pm	Academics
4:35-4:55pm	Supper in class room
4:55-5:00pm	Transition
5:00-5:35pm	Choir Group A
	Bucket Band B
5:35pm	Transition
5:35-6:10pm	Choir Group B
	Bucket Band A
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Beethoven Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Tchaikovsky Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Mahler Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to choir
3:35-4:15pm	Choir
4:15-4:20pm	Transition to café
4:20-4:40pm	Supper
4:40-4:45pm	Transition
4:45-5:25pm	Group Lessons
Ensemble	Mahler WW/brass
5:25-5:30pm	Transition
5:30-6:10pm	Group Lessons
Ensemble	Mahler strings
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

OrchKids Thursday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Staffing:

Choir Director
Bucket Band Instructor
Assistant Bucket Band Instructor
Brass Group Lesson Instructor
Clarinet Group Lesson Instructor
Flute Group Lesson Instructor
Cello Group Lesson Instructor
Violin Group Lesson Instructor
Bass Group Lesson Instructor
Brass TA
Woodwind TA
Strings TA
Ensemble Director
Assistant Ensemble Director
Program Assistant
Program Coordinator

OrchKids Friday Schedule
2011-2012 School Year

Beethoven Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academics
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Group Lessons
6:10-6:15pm	Transition
6:15pm	Dismissal

Tchaikovsky Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academics
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Ensemble
6:10-6:15pm	Transition/Breakdown
6:15pm	Dismissal w/instruments

Mahler Group

3:30-3:35pm	Transition to academics
3:35-4:50pm	Academics
4:50-5:10pm	Supper in café
5:10-5:15pm	Transition
5:15-6:10pm	Ensemble
6:00-6:15pm	Transition/Breakdown
6:15pm	Dismissal w/instruments

Staffing:

Choir Director
Bucket Band Instructor
Assistant Bucket Band Instructor
Brass Group Lesson Instructor
Clarinet Group Lesson Instructor
Flute Group Lesson Instructor
Cello Group Lesson Instructor
Violin Group Lesson Instructor
Bass Group Lesson Instructor
Brass TA
Woodwind TA
Strings TA
Ensemble Director
Assistant Ensemble Director
Program Assistant
Program Coordinator